

A PLAINE
AND FAMILIAR
Exposition of the Ninth
and Tenth Chapters of the
Prouerbs of Salomon.

MATTHEW. 13. 35.

*I will open my mouth in Parables, and will utter
the thinges which haue beene kept secret from
the foundation of the world.*



LONDON

Printed by T.E. for Thomas Man, dwelling in
Paternoster-Row at the signe of the Talbot.

1606.

Baptist Church
Hunley in Iowa



To the Right VVorshipfull

Sir *Anthonie Cope*, Knight,

grace, mercie, and peace bee
multiplied.



Ir, your louing acceptance of our former treatise, together with the good entertainment which it hath found with many christian readers, hath much encouraged vs to dedicate this also to your fauourable patronage. Wee are now more willing to make some work for the presse, because we haue no imployment in the pulpit. And who knoweth but that others (whom God hath graced with far greater sufficiencie) may bee stirred vp heereby, to publish some of their godly meditations: that as their faithfull labours were formerly like pure fountaines, which did onely refresh their particular congregations: so now, by meanes of printing, they may bee made like great and comfortable riuers, to water the whole land.

And whereas we and our families haue plentifully tasted of your goodnesse and mercie, we thought it our bounden duties to manifest our vsfained thankesfulnesse for the same: that other Patrons may

A.iiij.

be

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

be moted by your example, to shew the like compassion to their distressed Ministers, that you haue done to vs and ours, if our successe fall out according to our hope, we purpose (by Gods assistance) to proceed further in this booke of the Prouerbs, in the same methode which is heere already begun, if otherwise: yet this is our comfort, that it hath beene, and is our continuall care, and hearts desire, to keepe a good conscience, and to recompence our present silence with the best seruice that we are able to performe vnto the Church. The God of all mercie and comfort, multiplie his gracious blessings vpon you more and more, and graunt all peace and prosperitie to all those that faithfully loue and seeke, the peace of the Church, and the prosperitie of the Gospell.

Your worships in all Christian

duties to bee commaunded,

John Dod, Robert Cleaver.



To the Christian Reader.



*He wisdome of God, who best knoweth
enery mans affections, doth testifie, that
such as are full doe loath an hony Prou. 27. 7.
combe: but to them that are hungry
euen bitter things beecome sweete.
That which is very good, yea precious,
and desired of the best, is distasted of such
as regard not instruction: but that which
is good at all, though meane, and despi-*

*sed of the most, is sauoury to such as soundly seeke saluation. The
perswasion whereof hath encouraged vs to bring forth our promission,
and to set before thee such fooode as God hath inabled vs to prepare.
We rest assured of thy Christian loue towards vs, & providence for
thine owne soule, that thou wilt be more affected with the matter of
this treatise, being, as we hope, sound, and without corruption, then
offended with the manner thereof, being homely, and without elegancie.
As in expounding this Scripture to our owne flocke, we respected
the capacitie of our vnlearned hearers, so in publishing the same to
others, we tender the profit of the simplest readers. And as for them
that are iudicious, and Godly learned, we presume that their owne
knowledge, & the reading of more excellent discourses, will minister
wisdome, to make their vse of this slender worke, as this worke will
giue them occasion to esteeme the better of more excellent discourses.
We haue thought good to choose these two Chapters to beginne
with, though almost in the middest of the booke, that we might propose
to thee a patterne of the exposition of both sorts of parables,
as well of such as are set downe in forme of a treatise, and continued
discourse, as of those which are for the most part single sentences.
If thou shalt iudge, that there may be any fruit of these trauels,*

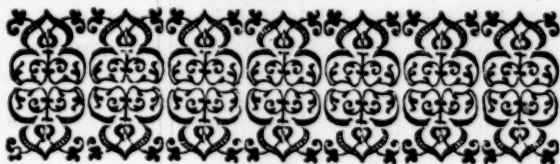
To the Christian Reader.

we are minded, if God will, to explicate the rest, but by parts, and at severall times, and not all entirely together. Now in reading of this, observe that the reasons and uses of the points, are not inferred upon the allegations, or amplifications, immediately going before, but depend upon the propositions which are the doctrines raised out of the severall verses: And into them are we compelled to enter abruptly without any precedent introduction to lead us, least we should either weary our selves in seeking varietie of preambles, or wearie thee with innumerable tautologies and repetitions. In the printing, the pointing in sundry places is misplaced, which in reading thou shalt easily finde, and we hope wilt easily redresse.

The God of mercie grant thee that grace which we can but wish thee, and by the efficacie of his spirit worke in thine heart the vertue and power of this his holy word, which we can onely by tongue and penne declare unto thee. Amen.

ERRATA.

Folio 4, line 2. read *professe*, fol. 6, l. 34. read *nouriture*, fol. 12, l. 16. read *describing*, fol. 13, l. 23. read *discourse*, fol. 98, l. 9. read *heart*, fol. 111, put out, doth, the first word of the line. Other faults, friendly Reader, if thou find any, I pray thee fauorably beare with.



A Learned and Fruitfull Exposition vpon the ninth Chapter of the Prouerbes of Salomon.

Prouerbs Cap 9 Ver. 1.



His Chapter doth containe a brieſe recapitulation or ſummarie almoſt of all the former eight Chapters : containing. Firſt the holy inſtructions of Wiſedome, in the perſon of a Princeſſe or great Lady making a banquet. Secondly, the deceiueable and enticing flatteries of Sinfulneſſe and Folly, in the perſon of a ſmooth and guilefull harlot.

Wiſedome hath built her houſe, &c.

Verſe. 1.

(*Wiſedome or Wiſedomes*) viz. the moſt abſolute and ſoueraigne Wiſedome, the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is the perfect wiſedome of his father, (*hath built her houſe*) that is the Church, which is ſo called, 1. *Tim.* 3. 15. (*and hewen out her ſeauen pillars*) that is, hath moſt firmly founded, and perpetually ſupporteth it with his owne hand, which is more powerfull for it, than many pillars and buttrefſes are to ſuſtaine a materiall building, whereby alſo is intended that the Churches ſafetie is accompanied with beautie, as hauing pillars hewen out and poliſhed, and not made of rough ſtones without garniſhing.

B.

Wiſe.

Doftr. 1.
All true wife-
dome is in
Gods word.

1. Cor. 1.

Reasons. 1.

Wifedome, &c. All true wifedome is contained in the holy word of God, he nameth not power, iustice, truth, or mercie, though these be also there in fulnesse, but wifedome in this case taketh the first place, and shineth out in greatest brightnesse: In regard whereof, the Apostle with a kind of insultation, doth expostulate with worldly wise men, *where is the wise? where is the Scribe? hath not God made the wifedome of this world foolishnesse?* that is, whatsoeuer policie or reason doth compare with the wifedome of the spirit, or is repugnant to it, or not sanctified by it, that the Lord in word reproveth, and in deede confoundeth.

First, it ouermatcheth and ouerthroweth all the craft of cunning men, and the subtiltie of Sathan himselte: for whatsoeuer plots or practises of mischiefe hee hath seemed most to preuaile in, haue alwayes turned to the ruine of his owne kingdom, and albeit he suggest new temptations, and raise vp new errors, and deuise sinnes of new fashions, yet the Scriptures are euermore readily appointed with new arguments to repell them.

2 Secondly, it is the fountaine, from whence is deriued all sound vnderstanding, without which no man can attaine to true wifedome: it sharpeneth the wit of the most sillie and ignorant, and addeth to the knowledge of the most iudicious and learned.

Vfe. 1.

Reprofe of them that condemne Gods holy ordinances of folly, and be ashamed of the practise and profession of them: but as for the inuentions of flesh and blood, the sayings of men and the painted shewes of humane wit, those they haue in high admiration.

2 Instruction, to renounce and put off our owne carnall reason, and to be directed onely by the commaundements and counsels of God in the Scriptures. Chap. 3. 5. 6.

3 Consolation against the craftie heads of subtile foxes, which goe about to circumuent poore simple and harmelesse christians: if we can pray against their practises, as *Dauid* did, their purposes and counsels shalbe turned into folly, as *Achitophels* was.

Bnile

Built her house. &c. It belongeth onely to Christ, both to build and beautifie the Church, which caused *David* though he was king, and seemed to haue the whole disposing of the matter in his owne hand, yet to intreate the Lord to shew mercie to Zion and to build vp the wals of Ierusalem: that is, to prouide for the safetie, increase and good estate of the godly. If no man, no not *Salomon* bee able by his industrie to build an earthly familie, much lesse can any erect a Church which is Gods spirituall habitation, and to this purpose tends all that is heere ascribed to Wisedome, her house, her pillars, her vittales, her wine, her table, her maides: that is Christ his spirituall house, protection, feast, and messengers, for notwithstanding the ministers be men and not spirits, yet their function is spirituall, and not humane.

Doct. 2.
Christ onely is
the builder &
beautifier of
the Church.
Psal. 51. 18.

Psal 127. 1.

First, hee alone hath the disposing of the word, vouchsafing it to some and denying it to others, according to his owne will. *Psal. 147. 19. 20.* Secondly, no man, nor meanes can bee sufficient to make sufficient ministers, vnlesse hee both furnish and send them forth, *Rom. 10. 25.* Thirdly, his spirit conuerteth mens soules, and begetteth them to euerlasting life, and so they become stones of this building, for were not the word made mightie and effectuall by him, Sathan would keepe his hold against the preachers, and proude hearts would neuer be brought into subiection. *2. Cor. 10. 4. 5.*

Reasons. 1.
God giues his
word where
he will.

2

3

So far as wee wish well to the Church, let vs by prayers to God procure the welfare thereof, as was practised by *Daniel*, *Nehemiah*, and others, notwithstanding the great accompt they were in with their Princes.

Vse 1.
Psal. 122. 6.

Reproofe of Papists and others that resist God in his work, attempting to plucke downe that which hee hath set vp, as to hinder the increase of Christians, to stop the passage of the Gospell, and as much as in them is, to restraints the course of all Christianitie, who as they walke in the steps of their brother *Elmas*, so may they looke for the like successe with him. *Act. 13. 10.*

2

Consolation, that the case of the Church were not desperate, though it should come to passe, that men eyther darst
B.ij. not

3

Hsa. 59. 16.

Doct. 3.
Christians
only are in
safely.

Psal. 4.

Reasons.

I

2

1. Kings. 11.

3

not, or would not, or could not promote religion, or protect such as proues it: for Christ will not faile of his faithfullnesse, as hee is no way disappointed of his help, for his sufficiencie is in himselfe, and the worke belongeth to himselfe, and he will neuer desist from it, vntill it be accomplished.

Seauen pillars. The best way for good safetie is to become a faithfull Christian. Of such the Prophet speaketh, *Psal. 125. They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be remoued*, wicked men be like to chaffe or dust that hath no stabilitie, but is easilie driven by the winde into puddles and all other filthie places, without any resistance: but it is as easie to ouerturne a great mountaine, as to ouerthrow the hope and good estate of the godly.

First his tender care is continually watchfull for their safetie, as the eye and wings of the henne are alwayes ready to succour her young ones, *Psal. 91. 4.* and nearer are they to him, than the chickens to their damme, as beeing members of his owne body, and the very apple of his eye. *Zach. 2. 8.*

Secondly, his power is alwaies exercised for their preservation, which was figured by the two brazen pillars in the Temple, the one called *Iachin*, that is, the Lord will establish, and the other *Boaz*, that is, in him is strength: both these conioyned doe make the safetie of his seruants compleate, if he had power, and not applyed it for our help, our case were nothing the better, if he should set himselfe to vphold vs and faile of power, we could not stand, and therefore they were assured by these signes both of the one and the other.

Thirdly, it concerneth him in equitie, to stand for his owne people, that haue cast themselves vpon him, and labour in his seruice, especially he giuing warrantize for their safety. *Psal. 91. 4.*

Object. But they are wronged and spoyled and sometimes also killed.

Answer. Gods prouidence doth not free vs from troubles, but preserue vs in them, for then it is most seasonable. Wisdom did foresee that there would bee assaults, else why did shee make her castle so strong? But this is the happy estate of Christi-

Christians, that though they bee persecuted, yet they bee not forsaken: and though they bee slaine, yet not ouercome; because the loue of God remayneth with them, and a blessed reward is prepared for them.

Reproofof fearefull persons which haue no courage for the truth, that dare not shew themselues in any good cause; which may procure displeasure, nor exercise those seruices which are necessary for their saluation.

Vse. 1.

Secondly, terrour for persecutors and such as oppose themselves against godly Christians: they set themselves to beate downe Gods house vpon his head, to hew out the stones, and dig downe the walles, to plucke downe the timber from off the roofof: and they imagine that there is neither difficultie nor danger in this attempt, but that they may easily and with impunitie effect their purpose. But howsoever they esteeme it a cottage that standeth on rotten props, they shall finde it a castle that standeth on mightie pillars: and if it stand, they shall fall. And looke how much safety is to the house & them that be in it; so much perill is to the enimies and them that assault it: for he is not onely a wall of defence round about his people, but a wall of fire to consume their enimies. *Zach. 2. 5.*

2

Thirdly, consolation, though the enimies of the Church be neuer so many or mightie, yet doth it stand still impregnable and inuincible: the gates of hell, that is, the power of all the Diuels shall not preuaile against it. And such is the safety of euery particular Christian, both for soule and body, for if one stone could bee cast downe, the whole building might bee demolished.

3

Mat. 16. 18.

Shee hath killed her vitayles, mingled her wine, &c.

Verse. 2.

Mention was made before of Wisedomes house, and the strength of it; and heere of her hospitalitie and house keeping in it; where heauenly things are represented by earthly, and the bountie and magnificence of the Lord, by the plentifull prouision of a liberall feast-maker. For the graces of his spirit by the ministry of the word, are compared to daintie meates and delicious wines, either spiced, or mingled with
B. iij. choise

choise kinds of coole waters, whereby in those hot countries they were much refreshed. Wherevnto is added the circumstances of readinesse; that there needeth no tariance, or long wayting, but all things are in order and commodiously prepared for the present refection of the guests.

Doct. 1.
The soules
food is the
best fare.

Killed her vitayles, &c. The best cheere is that which is made for the soule in Gods house: which is declared by diuers circumstances in the Parable of the great feast. *Mat. 22. 2. 3.* As that it was made by a King; and therefore not common, but costly according to his royall state and greatnesse: and was also a wedding feast; which is vsually great and full of solemnitie: and made at the marriage of his owne sonne; which consequently would cause it to bee much more sumptuous and magnificent, then if it had beene for a seruant or kinsman, or ordinary person. By all which is meant the Gospell, wherein euery faithfull man is feasted, and made Gods sonne, and married to Christ himselfe.

Reason. 1.

One reason to proue this doctrine is, the resemblance and agreement that is betweene the spirituall foode and corporall meates: it is delightfull to the soule as they bee to the sence: that reuiue the afflicted and troubled conscience, as they refresh the spirits of a faint and feeble person; and addeth increase of strength and stature to the inward man, as they doe to the outward.

2

Another reason is, the differences that are betweene them, wherein this heauenly & celestially banquet doth far surmount the earthly. First, this onely is perpetuall, day & night, through the whole yeere, and whole life, and at death and euermore: whereas all others are but for a few daies, and commonly not for many houres. Secondly, heere is no surfet or danger by excesse, though wee continue eating and drinking vncessantly without intermissions; which is contrary in corporall repasts. Thirdly, this is a durable meate, and doth minister an abiding nourriture, that hee that hath once digested it, shall neuer after perish by hunger. Fourthly this doth not onely sustaine life for a time, but giue it and preserue it for ever. Fifthly, whereas all other meates and drinckes, though neuer so plentifull, are onely

onely for the belly, and helpe against nothing but the present hunger and thirst; this bringeth with it safete, wealth, dignitie, and all happinesse. Sixtly and lastly, heere is open house kept continually for all commers, nations, ages, and states, without any disparagement to the greatest, or contempt of the meanest: none is excluded that is willing to bee admitted: none is vpbayded for comming too often, the more they frequent the house, the more they shall be made of, and the better welcome.

Confutation of such as stand vpon the merit of man for salvation: all the grace wee partake of, is bestowed vpon vs at *Wisedomes* royall feast; and that is franke and free, and from his owne goodnesse. Great personages, especially Princes vse not to take a shot when they haue giuen entertainment. Vse. 1.

Instruction, that wee come to the word and Sacraments and all the holy ordinances of God as an hungry man to a good feast, with a willing minde, a large desire, a good appetite *Isa. 55. 1.* and a certaine expectation to bee satisfied. 2

Consolation for poore Christians that finde such plenty of spirituall prouision in Gods house: though they feeble penury of earthly things in their owne. For the fruition of the greater, doth counteruaile the want of the lesse: and the comfortable refreshings of the soule, will make men more patiently to endure the distresses of the body. *Psal. 63. 1. & 5.* 3

Mingled her wine; &c. It is not the wit of man but the wisedome of God that doth make the ministry of the word comfortable. This doth hee assume to himselfe in a peculiar manner, saying: *I create the fruit of the lippes to bee peace.* It is as proper to him to giue peace by the preaching of the word, as to giue being and forme to a creature; or to take away the corruption and punishment of sinne. Else what need had *Dauid* to call vpon him to make him heare of ioy and gladnesse? if it had beene in mans power, hee might haue commaunded it at his subiects hands; and the Priests and Prophets would haue thought it a preferment to be admitted to that seruice: but he knew it was no more possible for the best qualified of them to remoue his sorrow without Gods blessing, then for a surgeon Doct. 1. *Isa. 57. 19.* Gods wisedome, not mans wit, makes the word comfortable. *Psal. 51. 3.* 3

geon to cure a wound with his white hand without a plaister.

Reasons. 1

2

First, ioy is a fruit of the spirit. *Gal. 5. 22*. Secondly, to giue true comfort is to speake to the hart, and to assure it of the pardon of all iniquitie. *Isa. 40. 1*. True it is that men may bee the instruments of both these, but the author of neither.

3

Thirddie, it is seene by wonted experience, that they which haue the finest wits, the greatest art, and sweetest tongues (not guided by the counsell of God) are lesse profitable in their Ministrie, than men of meaner parts, bringing onelie the power of the word and spirit in their doctrine. *Ier. 23. 31*.

Vlc. 1.

Reproofoe of such ministers as iudge it a base thing to content themselues with the plaine simplicitie of the Scriptures, but powder their doctrine with the dust of mens deuises; and authorities. Secondly, of such hearers as depend vpon the persons of the preachers, esteeming so far of the Sermon, as the minister is graced with outward ornaments, and according to that rule they measure all the doctrine that is deliuered, and so many times they thinke good wine to bee harsh, because it is brought in a pewter flagon, and vineger very pleasant, because it is brought in a siluer goblet.

2

Terrour to them that distast all kinde of sincere teaching, the more Christ dealeth with it, the more they loath it, nothing is so offenseiue vnto them as the mixture he maketh; they more abhorre it then gall and wormewood.

Doct. 3.

They that faithfully seek Gods fauour, loe surely inde it.

Prepared her table. Gods fauour and grace is alwaies ready to be found when it is faithfully sought. Our faith can neuer take him tardy in desiring that at the present which he cannot giue till heereafter, or in beeing before hand to demaund that which his ability is behinde hand to performe. The messengers say not in the gospell, be there at such a time, and in the meane while things shall be prepared, or goe with mee now, and dinner will be ready anone, but come, for all things are now ready.

Luke. 14. 17.

Reasons. 1

2

The first cause is in respect of God himselfe, whose prouident care hath foreseene what things would be expedient, and his power so sufficient to supplie all wants, that there cannot be the least defect for any one moment. Secondly, in respect of his

his Church and children, whose state doth as much require continuall grace, as the light of a lampe hath neede of oyle to maintaine it.

Confutation of their impious error, that thinke the word and Sacraments containe onely emptie shewes of happines long to come in another world, and nothing present, but dry and withered promises. What is this, but to charge God to be a deceiuer, and being voide of all mercie and fidelitie, to starue his people? We would deem him a miserable maister or householder, that hauing corne and store of prouision in present, should yet keepe his familie fasting, and feede them onely with a bare hope of harvest to come. The Scripture teacheth it not to bee agreeable to mercie to put off our needy neighbour till to morrow, when we haue wherewith to relieue him to day, and certaine it is, that the Lord doth not require more iustice and compassion of his creatures, then himselfe will shew his owne children. But those men finde the case to be so: they speake by experience, they neuer got any good by comming to such exercises, it is like to bee true, but why? they came not as friends, but as spies, and spies will bee espied out and turned away emptie. The comforts of the word and spirit be prepared for them that loue God. *1. Cor. 2. 9.*

vfe. 1.

Ch. 3. 18.

Instruction, that if we at any time faile of good successe in the seruices of God, that wee impute it to our selues, and not lay the blame vpon his ordinances: they were not barren of vertue and power, but we were wanting in faith or repentance, or in performance of some such duties, whereby we should haue bene better prepared.

2

Consolation, that if we feele want of any grace, or of power against any sinne, it is neuer out of season to seeke supply, we shall be sure to preuaile whensoever wee faithfully labour for it, and that as God hath grace alwaies ready for vs in this life, so is glory and blessednesse from euellasting prepared for vs in the life to come. *Mat. 25. 34.*

3

Verse. 3.

Shee hath sent forth her Maides. &c.

In the former words was shewed what preparation wisdom made for her feast at home, and in these what course she taketh to inuite the guests abroad, her maides are sent forth as messengers into the streetes, and gates, and market place, which commonly are frequented with greatest multitude and concourse of people, to call as many as they can meete with: not that maides or matrons or any women are allowed to bee ministers, but hee prosecuteth the allegory euery part of it correspondent and futable to other, as Christ himselfe vnderstood by wisdom is compared to a Lady, so his Prophets, Apostles, pastors, and teachers are resembled to maides, which in regard of sex are most meete to waite vpon women.

Doct. 1.
The ministry
of the word
the meanes of
saluation by
Gods ordi-
nance.
2. Cor. 5. 18.

God in his wisdom hath appointed that they that will come to saluation, must bee brought to it by the ministrie of his messengers, so the Apostle teacheth, that *all things are of God, which hath reconciled vs vnto himselfe by Iesus Christ, and hath given to vs* (saith hee) *the ministrie of reconciliation*: the father of his owne goodnesse hath vouchsafed to be at one with vs: hee hath appointed his sonne to make the peace, and his word to declare the performance of it by the sonne, and his ministers to publish it by warrant of his word.

Reasons. 1

First, Christ hath substituted them to bee his deputies, and still doth speake to his people by them. 2. Cor. 5. 19.

2

Secondly, our necessitie is such as doth require the help of their ministrie: for wee haue no inclination of our selues to come to this feast vnlesse wee bee sent for: many are readie to presse to corporall banquets, where they haue neither calling nor countenance, but be many times repelled that they cannot get in, or extruded and turned out at the dores before they be satisfied: but to this commeth none without bidding, nor vsually without much vrging.

3

Thirdly, the Lord doth so highly esteeme of their service, and so far obserue them that reiect their counsels and holy instructions that they that will not be directed to euerlasting life
by

Doct
They
saith
bods
Ioseph
indei

uke, 1
Reason

2

by them shall neuer attaine vnto it without them. *Luke. 14. 24.*

Instruction to be teachable and tractable to their perswasions so farre as they bring their message from their master, and call vs from the poyson of our owne sinfulness, to the wholesome food of wisdomes feast. *Isa. 50. 20.* Vse. 1.

Reprofe of such as account them vnecessary and vnprofitable, and thrust vpon the people as a trouble, burthen, and charge vnto them: who many times both dispise their doctrine, and persecute their persons. *Mat. 22 6.* 2

Consolation for such as haue them in singular loue for their works sake, dealing kindly with the ministers and taking the benefite of their ministrie: the kindnesse they shew is accepted, as done to Christ, and the promises they receiue be as solide and sure, as if they were deliuered by Christ. 3

Christ Iesus hath appointed the preaching of the gospel to be most publike, that all might be instructed by it. This moued the Apostle to be so industrious in his function, and desirous euery where to preach, both to the Iewes & Gentiles. It was his bounden dutie so to doe: he did owe them that seruice: the Lord bequeathed vnto them the ministry of saluation, and made him an executor of his will, and therefore hee was in their debt, vntill he had discharged it. Doct. 2.
Christ would haue the gospel openly taught that all might bee instructed.
Rom. 1. 13. 14.

First, all the doctrine of God is perfectly true and will hold out at the triall: the more it commeth into the light to bee looked vpon, the more it will bee iustified, to the glorie of the author, the clearing of the ministers and saluation of the faithfull hearers. Reasons. 1.

Secondlie, his goodnesse is such that hee would haue no man to perish, but would all men to come to repentance. 2

Thirdlie, hee hath ordained it to bee necessarie and effectually for the saluation of all sorts of people. *Titus. 2. 11.* 3

Fourthly, it is expedient for the rebuke of sinfull men. *Isa. 58. 1.* and the comfort of godlie men. *Isa. 40 9.* and the edification of all men. *Rom. 16. 26.* 4

Reproofe of Iesuites, Seminaries, and Brownists, which delight to creepe into corners. Secondlie, of ignorant and insufficient Vse. 1.

ficient ministers which neuer dwelt in wisedomes familie, nor receiued any message from her, and therefore are vterlie vnable to declare her minde.

Verse. 4.

Who so is simple &c.

Heere is a discription of the guests that be meete for this feast, which in shew seeme most vnmeete, as being most vnlike the Mistresse of the feast : and these are simple persons, destitute of spirituall vnderstanding, yet so as they feele the want of knowledge, and the waight of their ignorance, and leane no longer on worldly wisedome.

Doct.
The more ignorant we are,
the more need we haue of instruction.

Who so. Ignorance is not a cause that should stay men from hearing the word of God, but rather incite them to it.

First, their necessitie doth require it : for who hath more neede of eie-salue, then they whose eies are sore ? And who haue more neede of guides, then they who haue lost their sight and are bee-come blinde ? And especially when the way is difficult and full of daunger.

The vertue and efficacie that is in the word should allure them vnto it : for it is sufficient to illuminate, and giue light to all that seeke it. *Psal. 19. 7. 8. &c.*

Vse. 1.

Instruction for the ministers of Christ so to deliuer the doctrine as it may be most plaine and perspicuous to the simple people. *1. Cor. 14. 19. 24.*

2 Reproofe of such as affect obscuritie, that the vulgar sort should not vnderstand them, taking it to be for the glorie of their learning to mount aboue the capacitie of their hearers.

3 Consolation for poore vnlearned men when they come to the Church of God : let them not bee discouraged if their appetite serue them. They are bidden guests, and Christ hath prepared meate for them, and it doth his hart good to see them eate it. That is, hee is well pleased, and doth reioyce that God doth bestow his graces vpon them. *Mat. 11. 52.*

4 Fourthly, for the confutation, first, of the Popish seruice in a strange language, wherein the simple people bee so farre from receiuing any comfort by the matter that is vttered, as
that

that they vnderstand not the very woordes that are spoken, and therefore God neuer ordained it for the vse of his Church. Wherupon also followeth, that those priests bee none of wisdomes attendants, beeing neither fit to bee messengers abroad to call the guests, nor to bee officers at home to giue them entertainment. Secondlie, of such as make ignoraunce their appologie for persistance in ignoraunce. It is, say they, for schollers, and men of iudgement to heare sermons, and not for the vnlearned. Here is that excuse taken away, and so hath this text hetherto mette with many other shifts and euasions which men haue deuised to exempt their necks from Christ his yoke. First say they, this preaching and other exercises of religion be foolish and rediculus: but wisdom is the authour thereof. Secondlie, they be dangerous to deale with: but she hath hewen out seauen pillars. Thirdlie, they bee tedious and vnpleasant: but she hath made a banquet. Fourthlie, wee can learne as much by reading good bookes, as the best Preacher can teach vs: but she hath sent forth her maides. Fifthly, sermons are hard to come by, where should wee haue them? She cryeth vpon the hye places. Sixtly, wee are simple men and want vnderstanding: but she saith: *Who so is simple let him come hether, and he that is destitute of vnderstanding &c.*

Come and eate, &c.

Verse. 5.

The exhortation which wisdom vttered by her maides is againe repeated, to expresse the serious desire and true meaning of the messengers and masters in calling of the guests, and to let them know also, that as they are bidden by way of inuitation, so they are commanded by way of summons, and therefore to addresse themselues thereunto with all expedition. And because it is not their presence onely that is required, but a profitable vse-making of the vnderferued fauour that is shewed vnto them, therefore they are beefore hand informed to what end they are sent for, to eate and drinke of the delicats prepared, which is to receiue the merits and graces of Christ, with the promises of God, and to make them their owne by faith, and particular application.

C.iiij.

It

Dof.
When God of-
fers instructi-
on we ought
to receiue it.

It concerneth vs duely to imbrace the mercies of God when hee doth offer them vnto vs. It is his good pleasure that wee should enioy them: otherwise they should neuer haue beene provided. So by the Prophet he proclaimeth *Iſa. 55. 1. Ho, euery one that thirsteth, come yee to the waters, and yee that haue no ſiluer, come, buy, and eate: &c.* There is no vitailer ſo deſirous of gueſts for his owne gaine, as Chriſt is of our company for our ſaluation, hee would haue vtterance of his heavenly food that it ſtand not vpon his hand, and therefore calleth vpon all that feele themſelues in want, to come take their part with him. And becauſe they be needy and vnable to diſcharge the reckoning, he is content to be paid with a good ſtomacke to fall to, he would haue them worke it out at eating and drinking, that is, hee doth beſtow it vpon them of his owne free fauour without all deſert of their part.

Reasons. 1.

2

First, God neuer offereth any thing vnto vs, which is not meete and expedient for vs. Secondly, it is a grieuous ingratitude to- reiect the kindeneſſe of God. *Luke 14. Iſa. 7. 13.*

3

Thirdly, not to receiue the gifts which the Lord doth proffer vnto vs, is to diſpiſe them. *Ca. 1. 24. 25. Aſt. 13. 4 L.*

4

Fourthly, benefits not accepted, draw iudgements after them that cannot be auoyded. *Cap. I 27.*

Vſe 1.

Admonition to make uſe of the miniſtry of the word, not ſparing this holy meate, before the table be taken vp, for howſoeuer for corporall food, though we looſe the opportunitie at one time, we may finde it at another, though at one place we eate nothing, yet at another wee may haue plentie: though no man would feaſt vs abroad, we may provide for our ſelues at home, yet the caſe ſtandeth not ſo concerning this ſpirituall meate, neither our ſelues, nor any other beſide Chriſt, can any where, at any time ſuſtaine our ſoules, and being not fed by him we periſh for euer. *Iob. 6. 53.*

2.

Reprooſe of Recuſants and Browniſts, that will not reſpaire with the congregation of Gods people to the place whether Chriſt calleth them. Secondly, of ſuch as being pretent are yet without all fruit of Gods ordinances, they neyther eate, nor drinke of the ſpirituall graces, but onely ſee the dreſſing of the

the meate, and the dishes set before others.

Consolation to them whose hearts do feele the comfort of these graces, they be their owne by a principall propertie, as a man hath a peculiar right in his foode, whereof no man is partaker with him, but is made his owne by the surest possession, being turned into norriture, & made not onelie his, but a part of him; and Christ is made more certaine, and properlie, and constantlie ours, then the foode that is conuerted into our owne substance, for it will abate againe and be consumed, but hee remaineth our owne for euer.

For sake the foolish. &c.

Verse. 6.

Now she giueth rules of direction to them that were called, the better to fitt them for her familie: as first for their companie, that since they are to haue societie with the saints in the church, they are to seporate themselves from the sinners of the world. Whereunto shee perswadeth them by the good effect ensuing, that the gaine of euerlasting life will counteruaile and ouerpoise the losse of all worldlie and fleshlie friends.

The other is for conuersation, that for as much as they are to dwell with wisdom (for all the guesstes are domesticall and of the household) that therefore all their waies and behauiour, be holie and agreeable to wisdom.

When wee begin to cleaue to God and good men, we must forthwith breake off all league with wicked men. It was one of the first points of counsell that Peter gaue to the three thousand whom he then presentlie conuerted, and that which with manie words hee did exhort them vnto, that they would saue themselves from that froward generation. Yf they would haue God to saue them from damnation, they must saue themselves from the fellowship of damnable men. *Act. 2. 40.*

First, in regard of the case wherein they stand, as appeareth by the consequence of this text, that such as bee at vnion with dead men, bee in state of death, and therefore saith hee, *leane them, and liue.* Secondlie, in respect of behauiour, as the coherence importeth: *For sake the foolish & so walke in the way*
of

3

Doct.
If we will bee
good men, wee
must forsake ill
companie.

Reasons. 1.

2

Psal. 119. 115.

of wisdom; for sooner they cannot, being corrupted with examples, companies, counsels, and all pestilent and contagious courses: and therefore saith the Prophet, *Away from me ye wicked, for I will keepe the commaundements of my God.*

3

Thirddie, it bringeth them that vse such haunts, into suspi-
tion with Christians whereby they be deprived of that com-
munion, which they might haue with them.

Vse. 1.

A defence of them that shew their obedience therein, ceasing
to associate themselues with vngodly companions. It is not
their singularity, and puritie, that they would seeme better then
other men: it is not their proud spirits disdainig their neigh-
bors, and thinking that no company is good enough for them:
It is not because they are new fangled, and so forsake their
old friends, and cast of all good fellowshippe: but it is the
commaundement of God that doth require it, and their dute
to performe it.

2

Instruction to such as desire good men to bee sociable with
them, let them bee also good men that their societie may bee
good and warrantable, for so Christians may safelie and will
cheerefully adioyne themselues vnto them. Otherwise there
neither is, nor must bee, nor can bee any good agreement bee-
twene light and darkenesse, righteousness and vnrighteous-
nesse, God in the one, and Beliall in the other.

2. Cor. 6. 16.

3

Reprooe of them that can indifferently brooke all com-
panies, and conuerse with all manner of persons: If they bee
ruffians, blasphemers, & drunkards, they can play the good fel-
lowes with them: If they be Christians and such as feare God,
they can discourse of points of religion, they can giue testimo-
nie of godly preachers, they can relate what excellent Sermons
they haue bene at. Certaine it is, that they doe but counter-
faite on the one side? Then is their behaviour naturall when
they conuerse with the worst, and meereley artificiall, when
they come among the best.

The other two clausess of this verse are reserued to bee
handled in fit place.

Hee

Hee that rebuketh, &c.

Verse. 7.

Hitherto hath beene shewed how the message of saluation was sent by Christ, and brought by his ministers: now heere is declared how it is receiued of the people. And first, hee bringeth in such as be vncapable of it, namely, desperate wicked men, being altogether incurable, whom the Scripture termeth skorners. And these will attempt to blemish and shame all those that shall admonish them: As charging them sometimes with arrogancie, mallice, indiscretion and hipocrisie: sometimes with scisme, sedition, couetousnesse and other misdemeanours: and if these imputations can take no holde on them, as grounded on no probabilitie, then they fall vpon their meane estate, and parentage, and education: for so they dealt with the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe. *Mat. 13. 55.*

The most faithfull Ministers bee commonly exposed to greatest reproches. If they begin to disgrace sinne iustly; sin-
full men will not spare to depraue them vniuistly. And for this purpose whatsoeuer commeth to hand will serue their turne: If they can proue no euill by them, it is inough to traduce them for too much goodnesse. So was *Iohn* accused to bee a diuellish wretch, for being, as they made it, too precise and pure in mortification: and Christ on the other side condemned of intemperancie, for inioying a more free libertie in the holic vse of the creatures. *Doct. The best men most defamed Mat. 11. 18. 19.*

First, heereby they vse a pollicie to shift for themselves, struiuing to fence their hearts from feare, and their names from infamie. For if they could perswade their owne soules, that these sharpe censurers were as bad as other men, they thinke it would ward off the stroake of their rebukes: if they could make others beleue that all their accusations were but calumniation, it would free them from ignominie and discredit.

Reasons, 1

Secondly, they seeke to reuenge themselves in this, by drawing their admonitors into contempt and danger. They purposely take the way not onely to quench the loue and good liking which the people bare to them, but to kindle the displeasure of the maiestrate against them. *Amos. 7. 10. Isa. 29. 21.*

2

D.

In.

Vlc. J.

Instruction not to deale like scorers, in seeking to blemish them that would wipe out our blemishes. If they haue faults to be reprov'd, let vs shew our loue at some other time, & not our spleene at this time: It is no good way of clearing, to plead guiltlesse by recrimination.

2

Secondly, that ministers and such as are to admonish, be not shielded onely with patience, but with innocencie, and vpright behauiour. For if wicked men be growen to that impudency, as to giue assault to the names of harmelesse persons, (their obtreactions requoyling vpon themselues, to their owne shame) how would they insult ouer vs, if they had iust aduantage against vs?

3

Thirdly, not to bee credulous to the clamorous reports of vngodly men, which raise vp rumours against Christians. You shall find the greatest offendours, to be the most grievous accusers: they would couer their faults by bearing the world in hand that such as vse to finde fault with them, bee most faultie.

Verse. 8.

Rebuke not a scorner, lest hee hate thee: &c.

In the former verse was shewed how scorers vse to deale with them that rebuke them: and heere the holy Ghost teacheth how wee must deale with scorers. Namely, sithens wee shall needelesly stirre vp hatred against our selues, and performe no good to them, that therefore we desist from them, and let them alone. Wheerein notwithstanding good discretion is to be vsed, that none which may bee corrigible be reiected for a scorner, but such as vpon sufficient triall haue declared themselves by a continued obstinacie to bee so. And in this case also, though priuate reproofes are to be spared, yet must they publickly bee pursued by the ministrie, and censured by the Church, and punished by the magistrate.

Doct.
Obstinate persons are vnworthie a reproofe.

The benefite of Christian counsell is no to bee offered to an obstinate sinner. So doth the holy Ghost teach in another place of this booke. *Cap. 23. 9. Speake not in the eares of a foole, for he will despise the wisdom of thy words. He would not haue the*

the gracious speeches of godly Christians to bee powred into his eares which is well knowen not to suffer them to sinke in- to his heart to worke grace there, but setteth hart, and lippes and life contemptuously to despise them.

First, it is a certaine losse of labour to deale with them, and to as good purpose to lay a plaister to a dead mans wound, as to endeavour to heale them. Reasons. 1

Secondly, it is a losse of those precious admonitions: the holie things of God are throwen to dogs, and the pearles and ornaments of Christians are cast to vnteachable swine that will trample them vnder feet. *Mat. 7. 6.* 2

Thirdly, it cannot bee without perill to our selues which God doth not call vs vnto: for their hatred is like to worke disgrace, or violence, or other hurts which their dis tempered affections doe threaten. So Christ sayth that dogs will all to rent them that so offer to feede them. 3

Instruction to bee very circumspect what persons we deale with, that there bee some hope of successe. If after walking and standing in wicked wayes, they sit at rest in the scorners chaire, let vs leaue them there and disquiet them no further. For if wee molest them, they will trouble vs, and going beyond our bounds against the rule of Christ, where is our warrant of safetie against their malice, or of patience, wisdom, and moderation to containe our selues. Vse. 1

But rebuke a wise man, &c.

Verse, 8.

Now hee commeth on the contrary side to commend the competent hearers of Wisdom, vpon whom good lessons are well beestowed. And they are described, first by their willing receiuing of instruction, that they loue them the better that shall deale plainly with them: Secondly, by the good vse they make of it, increasing both in knowledge and practice of vnderstanding, and therefore are called, wise and righteous.

Rebuke. Men of best knowledge and piety must sometimes bee admonished of their faults. So was *David*, so was *Dij.* Doct. 1.
The best may mend.

Iehosa-

Iehosaphat, Ezechias, Peter, and many other. Rich garments require brushing, and fine linnen hath neede of washing, and the most pleasant and delightfull gardens must oftentimes be weeded.

Reason. 1.

First, originall corruption doth cleaue vnto their nature and infect their hearts, and many times defile their behauiour, and though they make it langish through wounds that they giue it: yet it will neuer be starke dead, so long as they be alieue.

2

Secondly, God hath ordained it as a medecine for humilitie against pride, that they shall stand in neede of the helpe of their brethren, and sometimes also come vnder their censures.

3

Thirdly, it is a bond whereby one Christian is knit to an other, when the one doth declare loue by giuing of faithfull counsell, and the other by thankfull receiuing of it.

Vfe. 1.

Instruction, First, that the good gifts of Gods children cause vs not to denie this duetie to them, when their wants and our oportunitie call for it. Secondly, to conceiue louingly of them that shew vs this kindenesse: they doe good to our soules, and befriend vs in our names, by couering our sinnes from others, and shewing them to our selues, which else might breake out to our infamie. *Iac. 5. 20.* And by this meanes God shall bee serued, and his Scripture obeyed on both sides: whiles the one part doth brotherly admonish according to the precept that heere is giuen, and the other part doth kindly accept it according to the reason anexed.

2

Confutation of them that too far iustifie the waies of good men, approuing their errors in opinion, their slips in speeches, their slidings in actions, and all else to bee well, and warrantable, and imitable, if the men bee wise and godly. Nothing of them is to bee misliked that hath an example of any good men practising the like: but they consider not that some things may grow on the slips that spring from the roote, and not all on the sience that is ingrafted.

Dof. 2.

Hee is truly gracious, that growes in grace.

It is a note of a man that is truly religious to increase in grace and understanding. It appeareth that they liue by their meate, and haue good digestion of it, when they grow in stature, strength, and stomacke. So was it said in the first Chap-

ter:

ter: *A wise man shall heare and increase in learning.* The bare hearing doth not necessarily argue a wise man. For fooles doe often bring their eares to the word, but to heare, and learne, and to learne with increase, that doth testifie an holy wisdom.

Gods blessing doth accompany such as haue sinceritie in them to adde to their stocke: and from such as haue no more but a shew, he taketh away that also, that they may appeare to be dissemblers. *Luke. 8. 18.*

Secondly, sound vnderstanding doth discouer the defect of vnderstanding: what great neede they haue, what little store they haue, and the dore of Gods storehouse and treasure opened to them for their full supplie. 2

Thirdly, they know the wants of these heavenly Iuels, that their price is inestimable, and therefore they grow insatiable in their desires, and though they get much, yet still they labour for more, and bee as greedie and hauing, as though they had nothing at all. 3

Fourthly, the former tasting & feeding on this coelestiall food hath brought them to a perpetual longing after it: the more they receiue, the more hungrie they are: the exercise of eating hath so sharpened their appetite, as they desire continually to eate. 4

Instruction to approue our wisdomē and righteousnes in Vse, 1. proceeding to be more wise and righteous: and so shall wee best please God himselfe. 1. *Thef. 4. 1.* So shall we be enriched with more full holinesse. 2. *Cor. 7. 1.* So shall wee bee established more firmly, and kept from all apostacie and backsliding. 2 *Pet. 3. 17. 18.*

Reprooffe of Non-proficients, which are taught much and learne little, and practise nothing at all. Secondly, of full persons which thinke they haue attained to a sufficiencie: they haue plyed it hitherto, and now they may giue ouer their labours, they haue gotten inough and now what neede they seeke any more? But let them heare what the spirit of God testifieth of their case to the conceited Laodicians, when they said they were rich and increased with goods, and wanted nothing, then they were wretched, and miserable, and poore, and had nothing. Hee that hath as much grace as euer hee did de- *Apoc. 3. 17.*

fire, did neuer truly desire to haue any. And hee that doth purpose neuer to bee better, will presently grow to bee worse, and last of all proue to bee starke naught.

3

Consolation for such as bee of the mending hand, though they haue defects and imperfections, and bee drawne aside, sometimes with lusts, and corruptions: yet if they still get ground of these enemies, and some addition come daily to their vnderstanding and desires by euery Sermon and other good exercise, let them beleue the testimonie of the holy Ghost, they bee in the number of the wise and righteous.

Verse. 10.

The beginning of Wisdome is the feare of the Lord, and the knowledge of holie men is vnderstanding.

Having so much commended Wisdome and so earnestly perswaded men vnto it, he sheweth now wherein it doth consist, that men might not be deceiued by the counterfait colour of it, discriding it.

First, by the matter, that is, true pietie and religion, called commonly in the word the feare of God, because it is an essentiall part thereof: and this is not a case contingent, as though wisdome and pietie might sometimes concur in one person and sometimes bee disseuered: but necessary and perpetuall, the one being alwayes the beginning of the other.

Secondly, by the manner, that it is not the knowledge of naturall things that is in Philosophers: nor the knowledge of ciuill affaires that is in Politicians: nor the historicall and artificiall knowledge of points of Religion that is in hypocrites: but the mysticall knowledge of the mysteries of saluation, which the spirit of God doth reueale to the hearts of Christians. 1. Cor. 2. 10. 11.

Doct. 1.
Religious men
onely are wise.

Eccle. 12. 13.

No man can be truly wise before he be vnfaignedly religious, *Salomon* had experience both of heauenly wisdome and humane wisdome, of the shew of the one, and soundnesse of the other, and thus doth hee declare his iudgement: *Let vs feare God and keepe his commandments, for this is the whole man,* nothing but this can make a man to be a man, without which

which he is in worse state then a beast : his glory and excellencie consisteth in it, and all his profit and comfort proceedeth from it.

First, God himselfe doth vsually in his word call all vnregenerate men fooles, especially euery where in this booke, & *Dent.* 32. 28. 29. now he seeth all things as they be, and not as they seeme to be: and foreseeeth all euents that shall fall out heereafter, and therefore his testimonie is to be receiued. Reasons. 1.

Secondly, Wisedome is a streame that floweth onely from the word, and that to them that make conscience, and not a bare profession of it. So hee speaketh by the Prophet concerning hypocrites : *Loe they haue reiected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is there in them. Ier.* 8. 9. 2

Many infallible fruites of the spirit be inclosed in it and issue from it, and are euermore in company with it, as puritie, gentlenes, readines to be intreated, mercie and fulnesse of good fruites, sinceritie, &c. *Iam.* 3. 17. 3

The miserable condicon of all irreligious people, whereas euery one is happy that is wise. 4

Instruction, that if we haue the estimation, comfort, direction, successe, or any benefite of wisdom, let vs not labour for a politticke head, but a holy and sanctified hart: not so much for learning and abilitie to discourse and dispute of points of religion, as for faith to beleeue, and a good conscience to performe obedience, *Dent.* 4. 6. Vlt.

Confutation of them that esteeme all to bee wise that goe beyond others in wit and them especially that compasse great linings and wealth: was not *Achitophell* more wittie then any? and did he not play the fool more then all? hath not Satan more subtilty and cunning then all the men in the world? and yet the most foolish creature to worke his owne woe that euer God made in the world. The Scripture calleth him a principallitie and a power and speaketh of his craft, but no where giueth him the testimonie of wisdom. And to them that know how to feather their nests and increase their state. The rich man in the gospell may be a president: he could get, and saue, and keepe, and thrive as long as hee liued, and yet God 2
called Luke. 12. 20. 31

called him foole when he died : and so (saith he) is every one that gathereth riches to himselfe and is not rich in God.

3

Consolation against the reproches, that are cast vpon men when they set themselues to feare the Lord : now (saith the world) they begin to be fooles, hitherto they have liued in good account, esteemed for sensible wise men, and henceforth they will bee nothing set by : now (saith the Lord) they beegin to be wise : hitherto they could haue no approbation from God or good men, but now they take the way for good vnderstanding.

Doct. 1.

Not true deuotion without true knowledge.

And the knowledge. Sound and sanctified knowledge is the mother of all Christian deuotion, where that faileth, there can be no sincere pietie: so saith God himselfe in the first Chapter, ver. 29. *They hated knowledge, and did not chuse the feare of the Lord.* Which *Iob* reproues in the wicked worldlings of his time: *they say to God, depart from vs, we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes, who is the Almighty, that we should serue him? and what profit shall wee haue if we should pray to him? wherein they declare that they hate his presence, and reiect the knowledge of his will, and cast off all care of his worship, and so there is an irreligious heart, an ignorant minde, and an impious behauiour.*

Iob. 21. 14. 15.

Reasons. 1.

First, faith doth neuer goe without it : for faith is a perswasion, and that perswasion is an high degree of knowledge, the heart beeing firmly assured of the truth of that which Gods promise did giue them to vnderstand.

2

Secondly, the vnderstanding is the eye of the soule to giue direction, and the fountaine from whence all good affections doe spring.

3

Thirdly, there can bee no exercise of godnesse (which is the very breath of all religion) where the commandement and promise of God is not apprehended.

4

Ihe. 6. 12.

Fourthly, the diuell hath the dominion of them that liue altogether in blindness: for hee is the Prince of darkenesse : he taketh, and holdeth, and leadeth them according to his will: and he will neuer be willing that either God should be serued, or any man should be sau'd.

1. Tim. 2. 26.

Vse. 1.

Instruction to vse all industrie and diligence to get knowledge :

ledge : especially that which hath the stampe of grace vpon it, and is proper to the people of God. Send to heauen for it by prayer to the Lord : search in the word for it with all good indeouours : by hearing and reading, by meditation and conference, by obseruation and experience, and all other good exercises.

Confutation of such as bee altogether carelesse of vnderstanding, that haue past a state of their soules to ignorance for tearme of life : they would be reputed religious and godly, and yet want both mettall and making of all religion and godlines: but they though they be without knowledge haue (as they say) a good minde. But why saith the Scripture ? *without knowledge the minde is not good. Prov. 19. 2.* yet they hope in another world to speede as well as the best : and yet the Apostle teacheth, that Christ shall come in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to them that doe not know God : doe they speede so well that be condemned ? *2. Thes. 1. 8.*

Secondly, of them that haue gotten some knowledge, but are voyde of all sinceritie and obedience : it is not a vertue for their good, but a sin for their hurt : and though for a time they make it serue their turne for a shew, yet it will turne to their sorrow in the end, for they increase the hardnes of their hart, and the guiltinesse of their conscience, and the number of their stripes, according to the measure of their fruitles knowledge. *Luke. 12. 47.*

For thy dayes shall be multiplied by me, and the yeares of thy life shall be augmented.

Verse. 11.

If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy selfe, and if thou be a sinner, thou alone shalt suffer.

Verse. 12.

After the discription of wisdom, wherby it may be rightly discerned is heere proposed the profit and reward of it, whereby we are perswaded to imbrace it : and that is.

First, in a perticular, namely, long life : which is not so to be vnderstoode as though it were perpetuall and so of absolute necessitie : for then good men must grow to be old men,

E.

and

Iob. 5. 26.

and all which dye young, should dye wicked and damned: but that God hath the keeping of their liues in such good safetie as they shall neuer be taken away before due season: they shall not die so soone as that it would be better for them to liue longer: nor liue so long as that it might be hurtfull that they died not sooner. This point doth *Eliphaz* truely expound to *Iob*, and all other righteous persons *Iob. 5. 26. Thou shalt goe to thy graue in a full age as a crop of corne commeth in due season into the barme.* Now all graine is not of equall proportion of growth: some is sown before others, and yet is cut downe after them: some is sown after others, and commeth to maturitie beefore them: so that good husbands dispose not of their haruest by measure of time, but by the ripenesse of their corne: and two extremities they prouidently auoide: neither too hastily to inne the fruits of their fields or trees, for so they would wither away: neither to defer the gathering of them after they bee ripe, for so they would drop off, and shedge, and grow to rottennesse. Afterwards he declareth the recompence of wisdome ingenerall: that the possession and practise thereof is not onely a seruice to God, nor alone for his sake so often required: but redoundeth also to the profit of them that bee owners and performers of it. And to this is opposed the contrary state of those peruerse and wilfull scorner, that howsoever their desire and purpose is to doe mischief to others, yet all their malice returneth on their owne heads.

Doct. 1.
Grace giues
maintenance
for this life as
well as for e-
ternall life,

Thy dayes shall be multiplied, &c. Wisdome and grace doe not onely procure our life to bee euerlasting in heaven, but of good and sufficient continuance in earth. So is she said to come like a liberall and bountifull Lady. *Chap. 3. 16.* which brought her hands full to bestow vpon her friends: length of daies being in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and glory: because life it selfe is more precious then wealth and aduancement which depend vpon it, and are but ornaments of it, therefore she bringeth the continuance of that in her right hand, as a gift of greater value: and the other in the left as inferiour to it, but all very excellent comming out of those glorious hands.

First,

First, that providence and power of God doth protect vs from all the evils that might befall vs : as wee vse to deale in our gardens and orchards, plucking vp the nettle and weedes and preserving the good hearbes : rooting out the bryars and brambles and nourishing the fruitfull trees.

Reasons. 1

Secondly, his angels haue a charge to keepe vs, by whose ministrie our life is defended. *Psal. 91. 10. 11.*

2

Thirdly, the feare of God doth make the heart good, and a good heart is made cheerefull, and a cheerefull heart procureth good health, and good health prolongeth the life.

3

Fourthly, a good man will seeke to God by prayers, in the good estate of his body to haue it continued, in weakenesse and infirmities to bee cured : and this will they doe ordinarily as *Ezekias* did in a case extraordinary, alwayes resigning themselves to his will.

4

Fifthly, a godly man will bee trusty to himselfe in the keeping of his owne body, auoyding surfetings, and distempers, and disorders, whereby wicked men doe weaken themselves, and will consonably vse all fit meanes of comfort, health & safetie.

5

Confutation, of them that thinke the seruices of wisdom to bee the greatest meanes to shorten mens daies. They will kill themselves (say they) by fasting, and praying, and musing, and reading, and running to Sermons: but thus to complaine, is indirectly to blaspheme God; either with imputation of vnfaithfulnesse towards them that seeke him, or with impotencie, and defect of power: for they inferre that hee windeth them into daunger by promise of safetie, or that the repaire of the soule, must needs bee the ruine of the body, and so he cannot heale the one part of man, without hurting of the other.

Vse. 2.

Instruction to take this holy receipt, which is a medicine for all diseases, and a remedie, to preuent all kinde of mischiefes. No Phisicke so forcible, or healeth, nor plentie so sufficient against want, nor any multitude of men, and munition is so able to defend vs from violence.

2

Consolation, to them that haue a good conscience that they alwaies euery where haue their safetie with them, because they carry grace in their harts, and God carryeth them in his

3

1. Sam. 25. 29.

handes. That is true of every faithfull seruant of God, that *Abigail* did speake concerning *David*: that their soule is bound in the bundell of life with God, it lyeth not loose, and scattered for enimies to finde, and take vp, or tread vpon at their pleasure: but it is in Gods owne custodie, and bound vp, that it shall neither drop downe, nor bee wrested from him. Hee will defend them in warre, and feede them in dearth, and preserue them in pestilence, and death shall neuer come before they may comfortablie bid it welcome. *Iob. 5. 19. 20.*

Doct. 2.
Onely Christians are good husbande.

If thou bee wise, &c. Of all men Christians bee most prouident to procure their owne good prosperitie. That testimony is giuen of them by the Lord himselfe. Chapter 3. 13. 14. *Blessed is the man that findeth Wisedome, and the man that getteth Vnderstanding. For the marchandise thereof is better than the marchandise of siluer, and the gaine thereof is better than gold.* They that obtaine not onely the knowledge of wisedome but the sound and sure possession thereof, which is meant by finding, are all in a blessed state, not destitute of any happinesse. The marchants which trafficke with the Indians for gold, and pearles, and precious stones, make not their commodiie, in any proportion comparable to theirs that deale with the god of heauen for the graces of his spirit.

Reasons. 1.

Psal. 128. 4.

First, in respect of outward state they are in good case, the blessing of God neuer fayling to minister vnto them all good things, in fittest season, in meetest manner, and most competent, and conuenient measure. They haue euery thing that they neede, and enioy the vse of euery thing that they haue. God blesteth their labours that thereby they get substance: God blesteth their substance that thereby they are nourished by them: God blesteth their nourishment, that there-withall they haue ioy and comfort: and if at any time they fall into afflictions they haue supportation in them, deliuerance from them, and benefit by them. All sicknesse shall be wholesome to them, all disgraces for their honour: all losses for their gaine: all danger for their safetie: all troubles for their peace and quietnesse.

2

Secondly, in respect of the state of their soules, the blessednesse wherof consisteth in righteousness: and that doth yeeld
such

such a benefit which as the Apostle doth truly testifie, doth farre surpasse the capacitie of all sense and humane reason, which will appeare, first, if we consider, the misery out of which they haue escaped : they were the enemies of God, and are reconciled to him : they were most deeply in debt, and are discharged of it : they were bond men, and are made free : they were condemned, and are pardoned : they were dead in sinnes and trespasses, and are quickned to euerlasting life. Secondly, if we respect the giftes that God vouchsafeth them : their nature is healed, their soules are sanctified, they haue a free access to God, the holy Ghost is in them, Iesus Christ is bestowed vpon them : all his merits, and all his graces, and all his prerogatiues are communicated vnto them. Thirdly, the fruite of their wisdom is apparant at their death : for then doth their faith, and faithfull behauiour stand to them, and visite their hearts, and animats them with hope against the temptations of Sathan, and feare of hell, and damnation, and all kindes of desperation, if it bee true that a good conscience is a continuall feast, then especially is it most forcible and comfortable at that time. Fourthly, the full and perfect reward of it shall bee rendred vnto them in the life to come, and chiefly at the last day, in the presence of God, and men, and Angels, elect and reprobate, and every particular of every sort, who shall heare their praises, and see their glorious aduancement.

Prou. 15. 15.

Confutation of them, that esteeme mortified Christians of all other creatures to be most sillie, and voide of prudence, and most carelesse, and voide of all forecast for their affaires. Secondly, of them that thinke all the precepts, and doctrines of obedience are onely for the exercise of the ministers authoritie, and nothing for the furtherance of the peoples commoditie, so they call it, *Psal. 2. 3. Let vs breake their bonds, and cast their cordes from vs.* As who would say, it is an imprisonment, and grieuous restraint, to be vnder Christ & his ministrie. Whereas instruction is for his vse that doth receiue it, and not for his will, that doth deliuer it : It is not a packe or burthen laid vpon his shoulders to carrie for others : but as money put into his purse to vse for himselfe.

Vlc. 2.

2 Instruction to take greatest paines in husbanding the hart, to labour most for the crop of grace, and to be most diligent in doing of good. Corne, and cattell, and money, and other wealth may be gotten for other men : and happely for our enemies : but the holy lessons that we conscionably learne, the gracious speeches that we seasonably vtter, and all the good workes that we duely performe, are treasured vp in heauen for our owne soules.

3 Consolation against the manifold discouragements which might weaken the hearts of such as be possessed with this wisdom. They are railed vpon by some to be hurtfull men: they are iested at by others to be foolish men, they are threatned, they are persecuted, and euery way iniuriously dealt with : yet let none of these things driue them from their wisdom, and make them turne fooles, to cause them to leaue of friendship with themselves, and to forsake their owne gaine. It is more beneficiall for them to be godly, then it can be hurtfull to be molested. A flight of snow, or shower of raine, or flash of lightning, or clap of thunder, cannot compell a thrifte farmer to disclaime his good ground, and surcease his husbandrie.

Doct. 3.
The wicked
man hath no
foe like him-
selfe.

If thou be a scorner, &c. The wicked bee most their owne foes, which poynt this holy wisdom confirmeth in the former Chapter ver. 35. *Hee that sinneth against mee hurteth his owne soule, and all that hate mee loue death.* In all the attempts, and proceedings against good men, wisdom it selfe is smitten at, for their quarrell is against the seruants for the mistrisse sake : but they onely sinne against it, but can doe no hurt vnto it : for that redoundeth wholly vpon themselves. And though they be all for themselves, and carried strongly with selfe loue in affection, yet they doe the worke of mortall hatred, and become their owne deadly foes in effect.

Reason.

The reasons which were alledged for the former point, will also make this manifest by the contrary. For as wise men and scornors serue contrary maisters, and haue contrary harts, and behauiours : so there is also a contrarietie of condicion, and of euery thing that befallerth vnto them. Whatsoeuer miseries therefore those other escaped, these shall surely fall into : and what-

whatsoever happinesse the other attained vnto for body, soule, state, or name, in life, at death, departed, heere, and at the resurrection, these shall be deprived of them.

Terrour for sinfull men which seeme to bee in safetie and very good case hauing yet suffered nothing but hardnesse of heart and the poyson of sinne working in their soules, which they least of all doe feelee, they must suffer also the paine of sinne, as well as the pleasure, and who knoweth how soone, and sodainely it will come vpon them. But in the meane time they plague such as set against them and pursue them that goe about to crosse their courses, and this they glory in, as a matter of great contentment. But heerein they make others happye, and themselves miserable, they procure the blessing of God vpon them whom they maligne as enemies, and bring the curse vpon their owne soules and bodies. But yet they preuaile further in their purposes by feare, or flattery, by company, counsell, or constraint, they draw men into sinne, and this they take to be a victory, and now others be in as bad case as they, and if things fall out to be amisse with them, they shall haue company in sorrow : but this will be noe ease of their burden for that shall lye wholly vpon themselves. They that suffer themselves to be seduced by them, shall likewise suffer punishment with them, but not detract any from theirs, but adde much more vnto it according as the case standeth with Sathan.

Vlc.1.

*A foolish woman is alwaies babling, shee is ignorant,
and knoweth nothing.*

Verse.13.

Thus much hath beene spoken of Wisdomes wholesome banquet, which the louer to that end proposed, that we might bee allured vnto it. Now followeth the feast of Follie, which shee maketh to that end that shee may poison her guests, and God discouereth for this purpose that wee might auoide it. And heere, as also in that which followeth, shee is described by her qualities and behauiour, carrying the right stampe, and print of an harlot. One thing is that shee is giuen to much talke to make an noise, which was the note of the whorish woman.

man. Chap. 7. 11. The meaning heere is, that sinfulness and Sathan by the mouthes of sinfull persons, doe pretend manie reasons to iustifie any wicked cause, and vse cunning perswasions to draw men thereunto, as the vnchast woman doth flow with intising speaches. And though she haue a lauish tongue, yet we knowledg, according as wee vse to say, that none is so bold, as blinde Bayard. The drift is that the factors for Follie such as labour to promote sinne, be viterly destitute of sauing vnderstanding, which was called before the knowledge of holy men.

Dost. 1.
Many words
make not a
matter good.

Shee is babling, &c. It is no sure note of a good cause to bee set forth with many words. *Hananiah* maintayned his cause more stiffly than *Ieremie*, for hee after a sort gaue place to the others confident asseuerations: but *Ieremie* maintayned his cause more truly than *Hananiah*, for God and experience confirmed his testimonie. *Ier. 28.* *Zidkiah* and his companions the false Prophets were more violent in giuing encouragement to *Ahab* for his voyage to Ramoth Giliad: but *Micahaiay* was more faithfull in diswading him from it. *1 Reg. 22.*

Reasons. 1.

First, wickednesse hath many tongues to speake by, all vnregenerate men being ready to plead for it.

2

Secondly, Sathan doth sharpen mens wits, and fine their tongues, and euery way assist them, that stand in defences of his causes, and kingdome.

3

Thirdly, all vngodly men by their owne disposition are earnestly affected to folly, and lewdenesse, being as their right hand, and dearest member of their body, and therefore will speake in the behalfe thereof, as if the case did nearely concern their owne estate.

4

Fourthly, all the arguments, that are brought for any bad cause, are light and viterly voide of force, and therefore that which faileth in qualitie, they will fill vp in quantitie, and so supply the want of weight by multitude of words.

5

Fifthly, successe doth much animate folly, and her adherents to speake much: for be the matter neuer so vniust, and false: be the reasons neuer so slight, and slender: bee the person neuer so base and abiect: yet if a sinner stand vp for sinne, all sinfull

men

men euery where will giue him allowance.

Admonition that we neuer conclude the equitie of a cause by the number of woordes, as though the force of the matter stood in the violence of speech, and all were weake that eyther wanted strong breath for it, or else had vehement opposition against it. The multitude of allegations is of no value, where soundnesse is wanting in the points alledged. And it is vsuall that innocent persons bee leatt forward to speake, and such as be faultie be seldome given to silence. When *Moses* came to take vp the matter betweene the two Israelites, he that was most lewde, was most lowde, the offendour that did the wrong, was most readie to complaine of wrong offered. *What wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian? Act. 7. 27. 27.*

Confutation of them that iustifie Popery, and the corruptions of it by this, that many take part with it. Much is said for it, great commendation is giuen of it. All this is true, it is much praised, but onely by the foolish babbling woman: they are full of speech, and frequent in writing, and yet doe nothing else, but some out fiith, and falsehoode. If multitude, or cries of commendations were sufficient to credit a cause, and cleare it. *Diana*, were a glorious goddesse, so highly magnified, by the generall applause of the Ephesians. *Act. 19. 28.* Secondly, of such as take it for an inuincible testimonie against the Gospell, and the sincere professors of it, that they be so much blamed, and so many professe their dislike of them. So they dealt with *Jeremie*, though he neither bought, nor sould with them, nor offered any colour of iniurie to them, yet euery man spake euill of him. *Ier. 15. 10.* So Christianitie in *Pauls* time was counted a sect, and euery where spoken against. And so our Saviour himselfe had the sentence of death infored vpon him by the violent cry of the people.

Ignorant, &c. So farre as any man giueth himselfe to be an agent for sinne, so farre he bewrayeth his owne ignorance. All deceiuers and euill men are first deceiued. *2. Tim. 3. 13.* The Diuell first catcheth one, and maketh him a baite to take an other, as it fell out in the ouerthrow of our first parents.

First, many of them haue their mindes darkened with want

F. of

Vfe. 1.

2

Doct. 2.

Follies friends
are most fooles

Reasons. 1.

of knowledge that they cannot discern betwixt light, and darknesse, truth, and falsehood.

2

Secondly, all the rest haue their hearts blindfolded with wilfulnesse, that they will not vnderstand. For if they know the will of God, and the meaning of his word, they discern not of his nature that he is offended with euery thing which is contrary to his word. Or if they apprehend that, and conceiue it to bee so: yet they thinke him remisse, that hee will not so seuerely punish them that offend him. Or if they haue not such an erroneous opinion of his dealing towards all, yet they hope for indulgence to themselues, that he will cast off some part of his iustice to dispense with them howsoeuer the case standeth with others. *Deut. 29. 19.*

Vse.

Reproofe of their folly that seeke to gather the praise of knowledge out of the practise of ignorance, that contradict, and disgrace all sound points of sanctification. Of which sort also are they that trouble the Church by setting abroad new, fruitlesse, fantasticall, and pernicious opinions, or reuiuing those that haue beene formerly suppressed: or managing those that be presently in question. These men beguile themselves and beguile the world with a shew of learning, but God and good men doe deeme it want of learning. For so the Apostle testifieth. *If any man teach otherwise, and consenteth not to the wholesome words of our Lord Iesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godlinesse, he is puffed up and knoweth nothing. 1. Tim. 6. 3.* Their skill, and readinesse in this case to crosse the truth, proueth not a spirituall growth, but a fleshly grosenesse, they are not filled with grace, but swolne with carnall conceitednesse.

Verse. 14.

Shee sitteth at the doore of her house on a seate in the high places of the Citie.

Hee continueth still the allegorie, resembling wickednesse to an harlot, whose propertie is to be abroad in the streetes to meete with companions, & to intise man to folly by her looks and bechauiour, which sinne doth also by her subtilties to seduce

duce mens soules. And yet shee goeth not as an ordinarie strumpet, or vagabond, but taketh state vpon her like a courtizan. Shee sitteth on a seate in the streete, which was wont to bee a signe of honour. *Iob, 29. 7.* And the word signifieth a throne, or chaire of estate, which were for Princes or principall persons.

On a seate, &c. Great men without grace bee as much subiect to sinne and folly as poore men. The scripture confirmeth this when it compareth such kinde of persons to viler creatures. *Psal. 49. 20.* *Man in honour which understandeth not is like to beastes that perish.* He dispraiseth not all men of honour: for when wisdome and dignitie meete together, the one is an ornament to the other: but those that bee destitute of vnderstanding, hee matcheth not with common men or vilest people, but maketh equall to the basest kinde of brutish beastes.

First, they haue the same roote, and fountaine of corruption which is in all other men.

Secondly, they haue more allurements to induce them vnto euill than other men haue: their great aboundance to draw them on to voluptuousnesse: their might and power to imbolden them to oppression: their high degree, with the charmes and inchauntments of flatterers to make them high minded, and to keepe them from all humiliation, and repentance.

Thirdly, Sathan doth in a speciall manner seeke to make a pray of them. For they bring whole flockes and flights of other into the net with them. Some they leade with counsell and companie, and some they driue by force, and violence, and their example, and countenance doth bring some into credite, whereby it is made exceeding infectious. In all which respects it was said of *Rahobam* the sonne of *Nebat*, that hee made *Israell* to sinne.

Instruction to such as bee in eminent places, and are great personages, that they be as watchfull ouer their soules as the vulgar sort and meanest persons. The assault of the diuell vpon them is certaine and forcible. Their owne strength as small, their ouerthrow as dangerous, and their punishment as grievous. And therefore it is not a contemptible worke, & vnmeet

F. ij.

for

Doct.

Great men vngracious may be as sinfull as any.

Reasons. 1.

2

3

Vic. 1.

for their places to pray often, to heare the word and exercise all other seruices of religion; vnlesse it be an honourable thing to bee a slaue to Sathan, and fit for their degree to perish.

2

Confutation of their opinions, which so admire the state of men of wealth and worship, as if euery one that had power, and titles, were necessarily wise and happy, whereas heere it appeareth that follie doth so possesse many of them that they are wholly transformed into her, and instead of being reputed reuerent, and wise men, they are called by the name of this foolish woman. The like in effect is spoken of them *Eccles. 10. 7.* That follie is set in great excellencie, and seruants bee riding on horses, when seruile men whose hearts bee in bondage to sinfull lusts, attaine to greatnesse.

Doct. 2.
Sinne and Sa-
than frequent
great assem-
blies.

In the high places, &c. Assemblies and meetings of men be seldome without the company of sinfulness, and Sathan. For hee will be one in the congregation of God, where they come together to pray against him, where the Lord striketh at him, and woundeth him with his word; and therefore will more boldly come to other assemblies, which bee onely for ciuill affaires, and chiefly when they bee for sinfull exercises, as may appeare by the effect of *Baal-Peors* wake. *Num. 29.*

Reason. 1.

First, there bee many to worke vpon, and therefore greater is the likelihood of successe.

2

Secondly, there is vtterance and vent for many sinnes which men vse not to practise alone by themselves: as swearing, lying, bragging, scoffing, rayling, flatterie, and all kinde of euill speeches, besides many actions, and gestures which bee proper to company.

3

Thirdly, hee hath more helps with him there, than when hee dealeth with one alone in secret. For they that bee perverted ioyne with him to peruert others, and they which were bad before, are so made much worse. It would haue ben hard to raise a rebellion against *Dauid*, if euery one had ben singly solicited, before there was any assemblee.

Vie. 1

Instruction not to walke streets, or haunt much company without due cause, and calling. It is righteous from God that the diuell should play the marshall to take vp them which straggle

straggle abroad without any warrant. And that was the cause of *Dinahs* woe, which would needes goe forth to see fashions.
Gen. 34.1.

When our occasions doe iustly call vs to such places, that we prepare to preuent all perils, let the word of God be in our hearts to keepe vs from sinne, as we would take preternatiues for our bodies against the pestilence, when the aire is infected. If the Diuell cast his fiery darts at vs, let faith be ready to quench them : If folly intise vs with guiltfull speeches, let wisdom shape her an answer, and send her packing.

2

To call them that passe by the way, that goe right on their way.

Verse.15.

This is the end, and purpose of her being in the streetes to doe mischief there : not onely to confirme, and harden such as be already entred into lewd courses, but to peruert and draw away those that be inclined to any goodnesse.

So soone as any man beginneth to set himselfe to seeke God, the Diuell, and diuellish men will bee ready to turne him out of the way. So stooke the case with the Corinthians, Galathians, and some other of the Churches, as soone as euer they embraced the doctrine of the Apostles, presently the false Apostles attempted to corrupt them. *Gal. 1.7. & 3. 1.* And so was *Paulus* the proconsull dealt with : *Act. 13.8.* Whiles Paul was preaching to him, *Elimas* was perverting of him : whiles the one built, the other battered, and pluckt downe : whiles the one laboured to make him a Christian, the other indeauored to keepe him an infidell, and vnbeleuer.

Doct.
The diuel an
viter aduersa
ry to all good
endeauours.

First, they bee enemies to the feast of wisdom, maligning the glory of the Gospell, and the prosperous successe of the same.

Reasons. 1

Secondly, they be enemies to the messengers of wisdom, thinking that they shall haue too much loue, and reuerence yeelded to them, if men receiue comfort, and profit by their ministrie. *Galat. 4. 17.*

2

Thirdly, they bee enemies to mankind, as touching the

3

F.iiij.

foule,

soule, repining that any man should bee in a better state then themselves (though themselves refuse to be in a good state) according to the disposition of their old father, who for the same cause so soone supplanted our first parents *Adam* and *Eve*.

Fourthly, they feele some preiudice to themselves, by the departure of men from the seruice of Sathan: they want their wonted companions, to ioyne with them in their wicked practises: besides the blemish that cleaueth to them for vices, by means of the credit that accreweth to others by their vertue, and goodnesse.

Vse. 1.

Instruction, how to carry our selues toward such as bee nouices in religion, as we come too short of Christian loue, if we be too suspitious & ouermuch mistrustfull of their proceeding: so wee goe beyond the bounds of godly discretion, if we be too confident of them, and so expose our selues to perill.

2

Secondly, to lay a good foundation, and to set on surely, when we enter the profession of Christianitie, that our ground work faile not in the time of triall. *Mat. 7. 24. & c.* For certaine it is, that the diuell by temptations, and our aduersaries by oppositions will make manifest what firmenesse, & soundnesse is in euery one. Either they will Satanically assault vs with carnall perswasions, or else we shall bee terrified with comminations, and threatnings, or else wee shall bee derided with scoffes, and reproches, or we shall be traduced with false imputations: or we shall be disquieted with wrongfull molestations.

3

Thirdly, that we should be as industrious to lead men in the right way, as they be to call them out: and to help them out of the snares of the Diuell, as they be to hold them in. For that is their sinne, which they are forbidden to practise, this is our dutie which we are commanded to performe. Theirs is falsehood, and cruelty tending to hurt, and mischief: ours is faithfulnessse and mercie for good, and great profit. They be the vassals of Sathan, and instruments of his mallice: wee bee the seruants of Christ, and messengers of his graces: all the euill that they do shall be punished with their confusion, all the good that we do shall be rewarded with glory. *Dan. 12. 3.*

*Who so is simple, let him come hither, and whoſoever is
voide of vnderſtanding to him ſhee ſpeaketh.*

Verſe. 16.

Who ſo is ſimple, &c. That is, which being ignorant diſcerneth not his blindneſſe, but hath conceit of wiſedome, and knowledge.

Let him come hither, &c. To the company, counſell, and praſtiſe of Folly. And to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding ſhee ſpeaketh, *viz.* that haue no knowledge of their owne, nor be willing to goe to wiſedomes houſe to get any.

Ignorant perſons that regard not knowledge are the fitteſt pray for deceiuers. *Eph. 4. 14.* The Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Ephesians perſwading them to knowledge, ſheweth the great neede thereof; *That wee henceforth bee no more children, wauering, and carryed about with euery winde of doctrine, by the deceit, or dice of men.* Wherein hee declareth the dangerous caſe of ſuch as want vnderſtanding by two ſimilitudes: one comparing them to little children, and the falſe teachers to craftie gamſters, that uſe to cogge at dice, who can eaſily be-guile a young boy, and ſtrippe him of all that hee playeth for, though his whole inheritance lye vpon the game. The other comparing them to ſhips, that neither haue anchor to holde them, nor ſterne, and pilote to guide them, and therefore the tides, & tempeſts doe driue them euery way without reſiſtance.

Doct.
They are eaſily
miſſed that
loue not to
learne.

Fiſt, they are already taken by the diuell, and bee in his power, and therefore as vnable to eſcape the ſnares of his ſou-
lers, as the birds that lie fluttering in the net. *2. Tim. 2. 26.*

Reaſons. 1.

Secondly, they are altogether deſtitute of all iudgement, nothing diſcerning truth from error, light from darkeneſſe, ſafetie from perill, and therefore may bee made to belecue e-
uery thing.

2

Thirdly, their hearts and affections bee corrupted, and therefore corrupt counſell will the more preuaile with them, & corrupt conuerſation be the more pleaſing to them. *Eph. 4. 18.*

3

Conſutation of them that diſwade men from ſeeking of knowledge, becauſe there bee ſo many ſeducers that goe a-
bout

Viſe.

bout to deceiue. It is dangerous dealing with scriptures (say they) wee know not well whom to trust, the world is so full of dissemblers, and therefore wee will neither heare, nor beleeue any Preacher of them all. But they will heare and beleeue Iesuits, and seminaries, and popish persons that intice them to Idolatrie and disloyaltie: they will heare and beleeue gamesters, and filthie fellows that will leade them to lust, lewdenesse, riot, and vnchristinesse: they will heare and beleeue such as will fill their eares with false reports, and poyson their harts with malice, couetousnesse, craft, and crueltie. As though there were no infectious people but ministers; no perill of contagion, but at sermons; none subiect to bee mislead, but such as vse the best meanes to know the right way. But consider the force of their reason whereby they would induce men to persist in their blindness: there be many slips, and much counterfait mettall, and therefore no vse of a touchstone: there is poyson prepared for vs, and therefore beware of preseruatiues: our enemies come armed against vs, and therefore let vs cast away our weapons: their purpose is to surprise vs in the darke, and therefore put out at any hand all the light. What is it but wisdom that doth inable vs to try all things, and to hold that which is good? what is it but knowledge that doth discric the venome of all pestiferous, and pestilent opinions? what is it but vnderstanding that doth discover the dangerous occurrents that will insue vpon pernicious counsell: For other vses of this poynt, see *verse 10. Deff. 2.*

Verse. 17.

Stollen waters are sweete, and hid bread is pleasant.

This verse containeth an euent that followeth their yeelding to follies alluements, that at the first they finde delight and pleasure, and great contentation in their intertainment.

Hee alludeth, as it seemeth, to the disorders that are wont to be in harlots houses, wherein at the meeting of companions they vse to haue a feast, and all the prouision is of stollen stuffe. Eyther seruants filch from their masters, or otherwise they steale from their neighbours, hennes, and geese, and duckes,
and

and connies, and venison, and such things as they can come by: which is called hid food, because as they cannot iustifie it, so they dare not let it be seene, but dresse it couertly, and eate it secretly in the midst of the night, in the most inward and closest room of the whole house. And whatsoever is so gotten, and there made ready is very delicious vnto them, though it were but bread and water.

Those things that bee most vnlawfull doe best satisfie the humors of vnregenerate men. Though wisdom make a feast of meates that be daintie and wholesome, and prepare spiced cups, with wine that is sweete and delicate, yet shee hath few guests that will visite her table: but let folly provide only bread and water (which they must also eat in a corner, and hide their heads like malefactours) and shee shall haue great store that will flocke to her house, and accept of their cheare with very good liking, in this sence it is said *Chap. 20. 17.* that the bread of deceit is sweete to a man. The vnrighteous trade and course of getting is to many a kinde of sauce to procure a relish to their possessions. They esteeme euery thing to bee so much the more worth, if a craftie head, a violent hand, a guilefull tongue, or any fraudulent meanes hath brought it vnto them. The same proportion holdeth in all other cases. How many bee carried with brutish lusts and affections to strange flesh, that haue nothing in them of beautie, and in the meane time loath their owne wiues which bee well fauoured, personable, and comely: and who almost taketh delight in any recreation which is neither vnseasonable in respect of the time, nor yet vnwarrantable in regard of the manner, yet it is altogether too fresh and vsauery for their taste, vnlesse the Diuell powder it with some enormous abuses.

And hence it proceedeth, for that all which is fleshly and most contrary to the spirit of God, is alwaies acceptable to them that be fleshly, and most agreeable to the corrupt nature of man. And so saith the Apostle *Rom. 8. 5.* They that are after the flesh, saue of the things of the flesh. And it falleth out in this case, as it doth in the infirmities of the body, euery maladie doth desire that which will feede and maintaine it, as it

Doct.
Things the
more vnlaw-
full, the better
liked of bad
men.

Reason.

G. is

is to be scene in cholericke persons, and such as be inclining to the dropisie; the one sort best liking meate that increaseth choler, the other thirsting still after drinke whereby the dropisie is nourished.

Vfe. 1.

Confutation of Popery, that hath dishes for euery carnall mans diet, the whole body of it tending to sensualiue. Euery sence is thereby fed with fleshly delights, insomuch as any infidell may be greatly refreshed therewith, and yet not led one step nearer to saluation. And as it is for euery mans turne, ready to satisfie their carnall humors, so men be of their owne accord, very strongly and vehemently affected to it. It is as naturall for them to be superstitious, as it is for netles, and thistles, and other weedes to grow without sowing or setting. And this is the cause why men bee so hardly reclaimed from it, and so easily vpon weake reasons ready to reuolt back vnto it.

2

Instruction that the spirituall delights of the word, doe repell the carnall lusts of the world, and the comforts of heauenly things doe swallow vp the pleasures of all earthly vanities. For vnlesse our hearts bee well fenced against them by grace, they will returne to their native home, and take possession of their ancient habitation.

3

Thirdly, Consolation to them that distrust these fleshly delights which be so pleasing to other mens appetites, it argueth that they haue beene well fed at wisedomes feast, and that is the cause why their stomackes can no better digest the voluptuous messes of folly, it is a cleare case that no man can loath the enchanted meate that Sathan and sinne haue dressed, but such as haue been nourished by the bread of life which Iesus Christ himselfe hath prepared.

Verfe. 18.

But hee knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the deepe of hell.

Heere followeth another euent insuing vpon the former, that as they had pleasure at the first, so they must haue paine at the last: as their intertainment was with delight, so shall their reckoning be with destruction. It is said, *hee knoweth not*: that is, euery

every one of them that bee tractable to her call haue the perill of their state hid from their eyes.

That the dead are there, &c. That all that giue themselves to such courses are strangers from the life of God, and in the power of the first death; and *in the depth of hell*, that is, are as certaine to bee damned in the world to come (vnlesse God giue them repentance) as if they were already in hell fire.

According as euery sinne is more delightfull, so is it more dangerous and deceitfull. The sweet meates of wickednesse will haue the sowre sauce of wretchednesse and misery. Sinnefulnesse wilbe the bane of transgressors, as the harlot is commonly of adulterers. It is the holy Proverbe of God, that when the bread of deceit is sweet to the tast, it turneth to grit, and grauell, to the torment of the teeth. Chap. 20. 17.

Doct.
Sin the more
pleasing the
more pernicious.

First, as it appeareth heere, men be willingly ignorant of the euills to come, when their desires be satisfied for the present. Which thing our Saviour doth also intimate by the example of the old world : when once they gaue ouer themselves to profit, and pleasure : as feasting, and marring, & planting, and building, and traffaquiring : they knew nothing till the flood came, though *Noah* had foretold them aboue an hundred yeares together.

Reasons, 1

Mat. 14. 39.

Secondly, when they be possesst with the delights of sinne, they are with much difficultie brought to leaue them. As *Zophar* sheweth. *Iob. 20. 12. &c.* that when wickednesse is sweet in their mouthes, they will fauour it, and not forsake it till it turne to a poyson in their bowells.

2

Thirdly, in respect of the present condition of voluptuous persons which liue in pleasure, that they are dead whiles they liue. *1. Tim. 5. 6.* They are sensible carkefes, & breathing carrions. For though they haue a reasonable soule which maketh them to bee men, yet they want the spirit of grace which maketh them to be Christians.

3

Fourthly, in regard of their future misery, for which Saint *James* wiseth them to weepe, and howle, and make all kinde of lamentation. For howsoeuer all reprobates shall be damned, yet they shall sink to the bottome of terrors and torments

4

ments in hell that haue risen vp to the top of pleasures, & cursed prosperitie on earth.

Vlt. 1.

Instruction, First, to foresee that which will follow, when baytes are layde, for vs by Sathan or wicked men, and accompt the threatnings of God, as certaine as executions: and feare the plagues to follow heereafter, as if wee were foorthwith to feele them.

2

Secondly, that no example preuaile so far as to draw vs into a wicked way. Consider not what they bee in outward appearance that dwell in follies house, but what their state is presently by Gods testimonie, and how they shal finde it heereafter by their owne experience.

3

Thirdly, that wee illude not our owne hearts by hoping to shift for one: for neuer any one could auoid the punishment by shifting. Sinne maketh sure work withall her guests, to give them their deadly wound at the entrance, so that death waites on folly to take them presently at her hands, & hell followeth death, to receiue them afterwards at his hands.

A



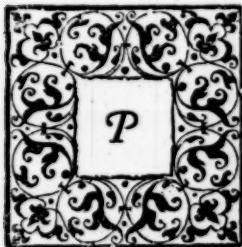


A Plaine Exposition vp-
on the tenth Chapter of the
Prouerbes of *Salomon*.
(***)

CHAPTER. X.

*The Parables of Salomon: A wise sonne maketh a
glad Father, but a foolish sonne is a heauinesse to
his mother.*

Verse. 1.



PARABLES. That is, wise and
grave sentences written by *Salomon*,
but inspired by the spirit of God, for
the information of the minde, and the
institution of the life, according to the
rules of Wisedome, Iustice, and Pie-
tie. The other nine Chapters being
prefixed as a preface to these, contain-
ed a continued discourse, wherein the
commendation of Wisedome, and the exhortations to manie
good duties were prosecuted with varietie of arguments: wher-
as in these that follow, for the most part, are set downe brieft
sayings, euery verse almost comprehending a whole point in
it selfe, not growing vpon dependance of that which went be-
fore, nor ministring th'occasion of that which commeth after.
Yet sometimes it falleth out otherwise, and diuers verses toge-
ther haue dependance one with another, as will appeare in
some place of this present Chapter. *A wise sonne*, that is, a
vertuous & towardly sonne or daughter, *maketh a ioyfull father*,

G.ij.

OR

or mother: and a foolish sonne, that is, a sinfull and vngracious childe, is an heauinesse, and grieve to his mother or father: yet it is not without cause that the mother is rather put in the latter clause, than the father: for that sex is the weaker, & more impatient of such a crosse: and vsually contemptuous children be bolder to contemne the mother then the father, as Chap. 15. 20. *A foolish man despiseth his mother*, as *Rebecca* was more troubled with *Eſau* then *Isaac* was: and very often the mothers by too much indulgence and fondnesse, are meanes of their childrens vices, and so it is said, *A childe set at libertie maketh his mother ashamed.* Chap. 29. 15.

Doct.

A good sonne
makes a glad
father.

The comfort or sorrow of parents standeth much in the behaviour of their children. This is euident by the example of *Jacobs* sonnes: whereof *Ioseph* a gracious child, was neuer but a refreshing to him: but *Simeon*, and *Reuben*, and *Leuy*, and most of the rest, by their sinfull actions did fill him with griefe and afflictions: and so had *Dauid* experience both waies, being peirced with sorrow on the one side, by the villanous practises & miserable ends of *Absolon* and *Amnon*: and abounding with ioy on the other side for the singular wisdom of *Salomon*.

Reason,

First, these affections doe proceede from the loue that godly parents doe beare vnto God, that thinking all too little that is done in his seruices, they haue now helpers euen out of their owne loynes, that will ioine with them in the same: and when they haue finished their course and ended their owne daies worke, yet the worke shall still bee continued by their posteritie. We see in humane affaires, that euery good subiect will be glad to breede vp a sonne that will bee fit and able to serue his soueraigne: and how can it then but cheere vp the heart and refresh the spirits of Christian fathers or mothers to haue their children the Lords Souldiers, valiantly fighting his battailes against sinne and Sathan, and that in their owne fight and presence? euery good master, as was *Abraham*, will think it a benefite to haue his seruants to be the seruants of the Lord: and euery Christian will gladly heare of Godly men, in another familie, in another towne, in another countrie, in another king.

kingdome, and therefore much more will religious parents be
raunished with ioy to see with their owne eyes the feare of God
in their owne houses, in their owne children by the blessing of
God vpon their owne gouernement, and prayers: but they can-
not but conceiue as great griefe by the sinfulness of impious
children, which wholly cast off the yoke of all holy obedience:
that despite him whom they honour, and blasphemie that name
which they sanctifie, and reiect that word which their soules
doe liue by. The Prophets eyes gushed out with riuers of wa-
ters because strangers, and alians, and euen his very enemies
obserued not the commandements of God: and therefore much *Psalm. 119. 136.*
more would he haue mourned when his owne sonnes rebelled
against them.

Secondly, loue to the people of God will worke gladnesse,
when faithfull men discerne their children to bee inclining to
goodnesse. For they are growing to be fruitfull plants in the
Lords orchard, and so many shall haue profit by them many
waies, whereas the wicked are as thornes and bryars and noy-
some brambles.

Thirdly, the happy condition of gracious and godly chil-
dren themselues doth procure to the parents much consolati-
on: for besides their spirituall promotion and dignitie, being
made the sonnes of God, and kingly heires of euermlasting glo-
ry, the fauour and blessing of God doth vsually appeare to-
wards them for the things of this life: when rebellious and
wicked children haue the curse of God vpon them, doing mis-
chiefe and hurt, and receiuing the reward of it, by shame and
infamy, by debts and arearages, by flight and lurking, by bonds
and imprisonment, and oftentimes by an ignominious death
and destruction.

Fourthly, wise children yeeld matter of comfort to their pa-
rents in being officious vnto them, and vsing all good behavi-
our towards them: for they are most forward to obey their
commandements, they are most cheerefull to releue their ne-
cessities: they are most faithfull and provident to preferue their
life, and health, and welfare. In which respect the Scripture
compareth them to arrowes or any other weapons, whereby
men

men may be defended. *Psal. 127. 4.* And as they are prest and ready to performe every duetie that is required of them, so will they also carefully regard their parents dealings towards them: the father giueth counsell, and the sonne is directed by it: the father giueth rebuke and the sonne trembleth at it: the father giueth correction, and the sonne doth humbly submit himselfe vnto it. Now at the handes of a foolish child, what is to be expected, but folly: contempt of commaundements and counsell: murmuring against admonition and reproofes: resistance against correction and chastisements: if their parents bee in wants, they are ashamed of them, and thincke it an intollerable burthen to bee charged with them: and so shorten their dayes by opprobrious and hard vsage: if they haue wealth, they seeke to make a spoyle of them: if they be like to leaue them patrimonie or inheritance, no enimie doth so much desire their death: if they bee simple and want vnderstanding, they eyther vse contemptuously to checke and snub them, or else to mocke and deride them. If they declare their wisdom and true pietie, they shew their bitternesse against their godly zeale and sincere profession.

Vic. 1.

Instruction, First, to children to take it as a motiue to stirre them vp, & prouoke them to Christian conuersation, that they shal minister comfort to their parents, and pleasure themselves, and please the Lord: for all those concur and meeete together in one. The sonne doth neuer give iust occasion of gladnesse to his father, but hee hath a iust cause to be glad for his owne sake; because God hath so seasoned him with grace, and made him acceptable to his friends, and vouchsafed vnto him his owne fauour. Whereas on the contrary side when the parents are much grieved for the chilles misdemeanours, the child ought to bee more grieved for his owne wretchednesse; for he shall bee most punished for his rebellion. Secondly, to parents that for as much as their childrens vice, or vertue is their woe or welfare, therefore they doe their best indeauour to haue their seede to be vertuous and holy. And he that will doe this, must lay the foundation of beeing a comfortable father, beefore hee bee a father, and take the way to haue good chil-

How a man
may be a ioy-
full father.

children, beefore hee haue children : and that is by a due care that himselfe doe marry in the Lord : that he propose such an ende, and vse such proceeding, and match with such a wife, as will bring the blessing of God vpon his house and posteritie. Secondly, if he be desirous that his children should yeeld him the crop of comfort, he must bestow vpon them the seede of instruction, and the tillage of good education. Thirdly, great care is to be had for the wise and orderly disposing of them in marriage, that all the former hopes be not cut off through the neglect of this dutie : For diuers times good people in this regard are like to come that prospereth well in the blade, but afterwards is either blasted or withered in the eare. Many ingenious and towardly young men and maidens haue beene vterly ouerthrowne by coupling themselues to profane yoke-fellowes, and being ingrafted into sinfull families.

Reprooffe of those that take least care to get wisdom for their children, but onely labour to provide them wealth, and thereby they are made idle, and proude, and vnthriftie, and prepared to wast with riot all that they haue gotten with care and trauell. And yet they bee far worse and altogether vnworthie of the name of fathers, that grieue at the graces of the children, and restraîne them from all the meanes whereby they might attaine vnto knowledge and wisdom.

Consolation to them that be enriched with this treasure of good children, howsoeuer the world goeth with them in their state otherwise. If they be wealthy and stored with possessions, they haue such to leaue them vnto, as are fitt for them, and know how to vse them, and are like long to inioy them. Whereas many parents doe leaue portions that are better than the children to whom they are beequethed : and the good creatures of God are put into the hands of vnworthie men, who are therefore vnable long to retaine them. If they be pore and destitute of other riches, & maintenance, yet the want of things of lesse value, is supplied by that which is of more worth, one good child is better then many wedges of gold : and no earthly inheritance is so faire a demaine, as a religious seede, which God doth giue in goodnesse, and by his owne testimonie com-

H.

mendeth

mendeth as a blessing that maketh a man to be happy. *Psalm*
127. 3. 4.

Verse. 2.

The treasures of wickednesse profit nothing, but righteousness deliuereth from death.

The treasures of wickednesse, that is, the greatest abundance of wealth, which is euill gotten, and euill vsed, or possessed by an euill owner, *profit nothing*, doe him no good at any time, but least of all at his death, or in time of misery, for so it is intended by the Antithesis and expresse, *Chap. 11. 4. But righteousness*, that is, vprightnesse of heart, and holynesse of behaviour, *deliuereth from death*, that is, from destruction, and all other hurtfull dangers. Yet not by any merit of man, but by the mercie of God through Iesus Christ.

Doct.
Wicked mens
wealth doe
them no good

The riches of iniquitie. No wicked worldling is any thing the better for his wealth which thing the Prophet *Dauid* had well considered of, and therefore confidently affirmeth. *Psalm* 39. 6. doubtlesse (saith hee) *Man walketh by a vaine image, hee heapeth up riches, & cannot tell who shall gather them*. He speaketh not of a particular, as though some one man were false into that errour, but of the whole body of mankind, in that case as they are descended from *Adam*. Every man that hath nothing but the nature of man, doth take a shew for a substance, the image in the glasse for the face represented by it: the picture of happinesse which is painted on riches, for true and solide felicitie: and therefore they misse of that which they make most account of, for they haue gathered together goods, and others shall gather the good comfort and fruite of them: and whether they haue provided for their owne, or for alians, for friends, or for foes, they are altogether vncertaine.

But if it be said, that thus far it profiteth them to bee wealthy, that they eate and drinke and liue thereby: our Saviour answereth that no mans life consisteth in the abundance of his riches: doe not poore men liue also? are not sheepe, and kine, and all other cattell nourished?

Obiect. But they fare better then others, and in that respect they

Luke. 12. 15.

they haue a commoditie in their wealth about others ?

Answer. But better fire doth not make their state better : it helpeth not their health, it sweetneth not their sleepe, it refresheth not their harts, it furthereth them to no good seruice. That meate doth a man good which inciteth him to prayer, & thankfulness, which moueth him to compassion & mercie, and which maketh him able and readie to exercise euery good dutie in his calling.

First, the store and plentie of riches and possessions doth nothing help the state of vnrighteous men in the time of their prosperities; for that which they haue is none of their owne: they haue neither right nor vse of any thing that is about them. *Isay. 61. 5.* They plow other mens grounds, and plant other mens orchards, and keepe other mens cattell, and become other mens drudges. And for this cause the Prophet *Habbakuk* doth cry out shame vpon their follie, when they thinke themselues to bee very wise and prudent; *Ho, bee that increaseth that which is not his, and bee that hideth himselfe with thicke clay.* They make themselues packhorses, or at least seruile porters which bow their backes to other mens burdens, and shall bee recompensed onely with feeling the weight of the same. Or let the best be made of it, and be it their owne, yet their owne is nothing but a load of heavy morter. And this were well if this were all; but the worst remayneth to bee spoken of: namely their burdens of wicked treasures bee as it were bags or purses obtayned by stealth, or robbery, which will therefore bring their liues into perill. Reasons. 1

Secondly, the abundance of outward things cannot succour them in the time of their calamitie: for so the Prophet threatneth; *Neither their siluer nor their gold shall bee able to deliuer them in the day of the Lords wrath* *Zeph. 1. 18.* If their danger grew from the heat of mens wrath there might bee hope that wealth would help them: for either a summe of mony would quench the flame of the aduersaries displeasure, or kindle courage in some others to defend them. But now that God is provoked against them, it is in vaine to offer gold or siluer to pacifie him, or to ransom themselves, for hee standeth in no neede 2

Hij.

neede

Psal. 62. 10. 11.

Reue. 6. 15.

Vsc. 1.

neede of them, hee admireth them not as men doe, and they be his already, and at his owne will, to be disposed of. Then to oppose them against him, in way of resistance, it were absurd: for there is no power in them to doe vs good without him: and much lesse therefore to maintaine any man against him. Nay they be so far from ayding sinfull men against the hand of God, as that they bee many times weapons in their hands to plague them with strokes of iudgement. It hath neuer beene heard that the purse hath preserved the man from the sword of the robber, or the chest from the assault of the theefe: but the contrary falleth out often, that men bee made a spoile for their money, and brought to ruine, as a tree that hath great bowes and a little roote is ouerturned in a mightie tempest. But there especially doth wealth bring woe to wicked men, when God awaketh their consciences, to behold their owne crueltie and falsehood, and the heauie punishment now readie to be inflicted vpon them for the same. This was *Indus* his case and such the Prophet speakes of *Ezek. 7. 19* They shall cast their siluer into the streetes, and their gold shall be cast a far off: That which was dearest to their hearts beefore, and brought them to sinne, they remoue furthest from them now: when they feele the sorrow of it. And becsides this although riches had some greater vertue, and power in themselves, yet they could stand vngodly men in no stead, because they cease when misery beginneth, when death commeth to men, and they come before the iudgement seate of Christ, the wicked haue horrible sorrowes and terrors vpon them, and all their wealth and substance is fled from them.

Instruction that we neuer corrupt our hearts or peruert our waies to encrease our estate, and augment our wealth. This maketh a wound, but ministreth no plaister to heale it. It will assuredly bring trouble and affliction, but neuer any strength and abilitie, eyther to prevent or to beare it. And therefore it shall be our wisdome to foresee the euent that will ensue, vpon any vnlawful course of gayning. We would not willingly enter into an house visited with the pestilence though great cheare were provided for vs. We would not put on infectious apparell

apparell though they were made of silke or fatten, or stufes that were dearest. And shall we be more prouident for the body then for the soule? Nay for body singly, more then for body and soule together? Nay for meare body more then for body, and soule, and state, and name, and seede and posteritie? For iniquitie will bring a curse vpon all these, and goods preserve not one of them.

Terrour to the wicked that thriue by iniustice, as vsury, oppression, or any indirect meanes of getting. Euery good man may say of them, as *Iob* did say in the like case: *Let the counsell of the wicked be far from mee*: their candell will be put out, and destruction will come vpon them, vnlesse they breake off their iniustice. All their commoditie is to them as the bait vnto the fish, with the hooke: as the corne that is scattered for the birds vnder the net: and as the sweete sops that are set for the rats with poyson.

But righteousness, &c. The goodnesse of a Christian will worke him that happinesse which no outward goods could euer procure. This was the message that *Habba.* was to deliuer to the people of God, to confirme them against the dangerous inuasion of the Babylonians, that the righteous should liue by his faith. It is opposed to the proud conceits of the wicked on both sides. The high minded Chaldeans intended to destroy all, and the stubborn hearted Iewes presumed to escape all destruction. Now the Lord shewed that neither side of them should haue their wils. For the faithfull should be deliuered from death, or the euill of it, notwithstanding all the power and weapons of the Babilonians. And onely the faithfull had assurance of happy deliuerance notwithstanding all the armour and riches of the Israelites.

First, the efficacie of the spirit, and the merit of Christ doth free them from the first death, and giue them a part in the first resurrection. *Ephes. 2. 1.*

Secondly, the prouidence and power of God, doth sheeld them from the hurtfull sword, which would bring them to an vntimely end. And they can at all times open heauen gates, by the key of prayer, and haue access to God in all distresses.

H. iij.

Haman

2

Doct. 1.

A Christian mans happinesse consisteth in his grace not in his goods. *Hab. 2. 4.*

Reason. 1.

2

Haman was stored with riches, and aduanced to dignitie, and backed with great friends : and yet on a sodaine with the turning of an hand his life, and power, and whole estate was ouerturned. And *Mardocay* was a poore man, a captiue, maligned, and condemned, and came so neere to the chawes of death, that after a sort it breathed vpon him : yet being a righteous man, and crying to the Lord, he obtained a glorious deliuerance. *Iehosophat* seemed to be in as great perill as *Ahab*, and *Ahab* was of as great wealth as *Iehosophat*, yet God gaue direction to the hand of one archer, vnwittingly to shoote, and to the arrow to light vpon him, and to finde a chincke in his armour, and to hit him in such a place, as through which it pearced to his life. And contrariwise hee perswaded the hearts of many others who pressed vpon *Iehosophat* to withdraw their hands, and to let him alone in safetie.

3

Thirdly, the death of Iesus Christ hath plucked out the sting, and taken away the venomie of their naturall death, as that it is conuerted into a quiet and comfortable rest.

4

Fourthly, the Resurrection of Iesus Christ shall at the last day subdue and destroy this death, that now houldeth their bodies in the graue, and death shall dye, and they shall liue in immortalitie and euerlasting blessednesse.

Vñ.

Instruction to euery one to get a sure possession of sound and vnfaigned righteousness, such as will hould weight in the ballance of Gods righteousness, before his iudgement seate : and therefore let him obserue these three generall rules which bee effectual and necessarie. First, that he put off the old man, with the carrall reason and shewes thereof : disclayming for authentick and allowable goodnesse, all counterfait, natural and ciuill vertues, and bee clothed with Christ and his merites, and sanctified with his holy Spirit, *Phil. 3. 9. 10.* Secondly, that hee make a narrow search to finde out all his sinnes, and that with godly sorrow and repentance for the same: obtaining also pardon and remission for them, through the blood of Iesus Christ. Thirdly, that he make a conscience, constantly, and totally to walke in the commandements of God, endeavoring to please him in all things. For hee that leaueth off well doing
in

in the end, shal loose all the comfort of his beginning. And he that is content to serue God but in a part, may bee suspected to serue him soundly in no part.

Consolation to them that haue attained to this righteousness, and bee furnished with it, in heart and behauiour: they are thoroughly armed not onely with the brestplate, but with the whole and complete armour of God, against Sathan and all his forces. And so likewise are they in safety from the perill of all places; the violence of all persons, and the terrours of all times, and seasons. When they are in health they neede not to feare sicknesse, when they are sicke, they neede not to feare death: when they are to die, they neede not to dread the daunger of damnation.

2

The Lord will not famish the soule of the righteous, but hee casteth away the substance of the wicked.

Verse. 3.

These words bee inferred vpon the former, as an answer to a secret obiection, that might bee made against them: why should it bee thought that men get no good by gathering riches in what manner soeuer? They stand them in steade in time of dearth & scarcety; when others that want them, though neuer so iust, are like to perish. Now heere hee sheweth the case to bee otherwise, good men are not vnprovided of foode because they are vnfurnished with wealth: and sinfull men haue no assurance of prouision though they haue riches: *for the Lord will not famish the soules of the righteous*, that is, will not suffer the men themselues to starue, though they haue neuer so little. *But will cast away the substance of the wicked*, that is, he will deprive them of the possession or vse, or vertue of it when they are in greatest neede.

The Lord will not, &c. Poore Christians be in better estate then wealthie wicked men, even in respect of bodily prouision and maintenance. Such a comparison is made *Psal. 34. 10.* that lyons, that is, mightie, strong, and boysterous men suffer hunger, and sustaine want (as was notably seene in the case of *Nabucadnezzer*, who in the midst of his greatest power, his

Doct.
A poore Christian better then a rich worldling.

ample

Haman was stored with riches, and aduanced to dignitie, and backed with great friends : and yet on a sodaine with the turning of an hand his life, and power, and whole estate was ouerturned. And *Mardocay* was a poore man, a captiue, maligned, and condemned, and came so neere to the chawes of death, that after a sort it breathed vpon him : yet being a righteous man, and crying to the Lord, he obtained a glorious deliuerance. *Iehosophat* seemed to be in as great perill as *Abab*, and *Abab* was of as great wealth as *Iehosophat*, yet God gaue direction to the hand of one archer, vnwittingly to shoote, and to the arrow to light vpon him, and to finde a chincke in his armour, and to hit him in such a place, as through which it pearced to his life. And contrariwise hee perswaded the hearts of many others who pressed vpon *Iehosophat* to withdraw their hands, and to let him alone in safetie.

3

Thirdly, the death of Iesus Christ hath plucked out the sting, and taken away the venomie of their naturall death, as that it is conuerted into a quiet and comfortable rest.

4

Fourthly, the Resurrection of Iesus Christ shall at the last day subdue and destroy this death, that now houldeth their bodies in the graue, and death shall dye, and they shall liue in immortalitie and euerlasting blessednesse.

Vcr.

Instruction to euery one to get a sure possession of sound and vnfaigned righteousness, such as will hould weight in the ballance of Gods righteousness, before his iudgement seate : and therefore let him obserue these three generall rules which bee effectuell and necessarie. First, that he put off the old man, with the carrall reason and shewes thereof : disclayming for authentick and allowable goodnesse, all counterfeit, natural and ciuill vertues, and bee clothed with Christ and his merites, and sanctified with his holy Spirit, *Phil.* 3. 9. 10. Secondly, that hee make a narrow search to finde out all his sinnes, and that with godly sorrow and repentance for the same: obtaining also pardon and remission for them, through the bloud of Iesus Christ. Thirdly, that he make a conscience, constantly, and totally to walke in the commandements of God, endeavouring to please him in all things. For hee that leaueth off well doing
in

in the end, shal loose all the comfort of his beginning. And he that is content to serue God but in a part, may bee suspected to serue him soundly in no part.

Consolation to them that haue attained to this righteousness, and bee furnished with it, in heart and behauiour: they are thoroughly armed not onely with the brestplate, but with the whole and complete armour of God, against Sathan and all his forces. And so likewise are they in safety from the perill of all places, the violence of all persons, and the terrours of all times, and seasons. When they are in health they neede not to feare sicknesse, when they are sicke, they neede not to feare death: when they are to die, they neede not to dread the daunger of damnation.

2

The Lord will not famish the soule of the righteous, but hee casteth away the substance of the wicked.

Verse. 3.

These words bee inferred vpon the former, as an answer to a secret obiection, that might bee made against them: why should it bee thought that men get no good by gathering riches in what manner soeuer? They stand them in steade in time of dearth & scarcety; when others that want them, though neuer so iust, are like to perish. Now heere hee sheweth the case to bee otherwise, good men are not vnprovided of foode because they are vnfurnished with wealth: and sinfull men haue no assurance of prouision though they haue riches: *for the Lord will not famish the soules of the righteous*, that is, will not suffer the men themselues to starue, though they haue neuer so little. *But will cast away the substance of the wicked*, that is, he will deprive them of the possession or vse, or vertue of it when they are in greatest neede.

The Lord will not, &c. Poore Christians be in better estate then wealthie wicked men, even in respect of bodily prouision and maintenance. Such a comparison is made *Psal. 34. 10.* that lyons, that is, mightie, strong, and boysterous men suffer hunger, and sustaine want (as was notably seene in the case of *Nabucadnezzar*, who in the midst of his greatest power, his

Doct.
A poore Christian better then a rich worldling.

ample

ample dominions, and large possessions, was yet turned a grasing like a beast, amongst the beasts) *But they that seeke the Lord shall want nothing that is good.* They may sometimes bee without that which they wish for, because they may wish for that which will not well agree with their safetie. But whatsoever is good, and there neede requireth it, that shall vndoubtedly be ministred vnto them.

Obiect. But may not a godly man dye of hunger? shall wee condemne all that are afaniished.

Ans. There is no doubt but many men: euen faithfull seruants of god in sieges, & extreame dearthies &c. be brought to their ends, through penury and want of food, but then it is good for them so to come to their end. The Lord doth call them home to heaven by such a messenger. In the like sence it is said in the former *Psal.* 34. 20. that not one of their bones is broken, that is, to their hurt, or through neglect of gods provident care ouer them. But one may haue his bones broken, & be hewed or sawed asunder, in great mercie. *Heb.* 11. 37. So there is a promise to Gods people to preferue them from the pestilence, *Psal.* 91. 7. and yet many blessed saints bee taken away by it to euerlasting glory. Else *Dauid* would not haue given them that testimonie who so dyed at that time calling them poore harmelesse sheepe: or haue offered himself to that kinde of death to preferue them alieue. The meaning is then that religious men shall neuer bee plagued with the venome and sting of scarcetie and famine, hauing it executed as a curse vpon them as it falleth out with sinners.

Reasons. 1.

First, they haue the good providence of God continually for them: his eyes are open, to see their neede, his eares are open to heare their prayers, his hand is open to releue their necessities, his treasury and rich store house is open and able to supply all their wants. They haue his loue and fauour, they haue his power and sufficiencie, they haue his word and promise, they haue his truth and fidelitie, that the will neuer faile them. *Heb.* 13. 5.

2

Secondlie the wealthie misers of the world haue the hand of God against them to consume that which they haue augmented

mented, to scatter that which they haue gathered together, and to cast away that, as a cursed thing, which they haue laid vp as a precious treasure. They trust not in him, but make that their hope, and therefore hee will make that to deceiue them when they haue greatest neede of helpe. They doubt not but it shall goe well with them, when others be in extremitie, and therefore they shall bee brought into straits, when it shall goe well with others. And so much the rather beecause they doe not onely glory in their wealth, and lift vp themselves aboue poore Christians, but arme themselves therewith and make it a weapon of oppression.

Consolation to good men that haue inward store of grace, though their outward state of money, or other substance bee very slender and small: And though their friends should also faile as well as their wealth, yet they bee neither destitute of friendship, or welfare. Because the Lord himselfe is all sufficient in himselfe and most neerely vnited, and knit vnto them by the bond of fatherhood. The Prophet professed, and published his assurance to all the world, that he should want nothing, in this regard that God was his shepheard. *Psal. 23. 1.* And how can he possiblie then bee forlorne, that hath him to his father? Euen wicked men will be tender of their children, and the Beares and Dragons will be carefull of their young ones. *Lam. 4. 3.* and shall the God of all goodnesse withdraw his hand to helpe his sonnes and daughters? especially sithens hee reacheth it out to minister foode to euery liuing creature, and amongst them to his very enemies? And from his owne kindnesse he can bow mens affections to be kinde, and make their very enemies, friends, and friendly vnto them. And let that fall out that the times should bee heard, and the prices of victuals high, yet Gods store is not diminished, nor his plentie abated, but he can afford his familie sufficient allowance as well in the dearest yeares, as when things bee at the cheapest. And then indeed his providence is most seene, and his goodnesse most felt, and the truth of his word most clearely manifested. For so he promiseth. *Psal. 37. 19.* *They shall not be confounded in the perillous times, and in the dayes of famine they shall haue enough.*

Vfe. 1.

Whereof *Iacob* had experience in a speciall manner, he neuer fared better then in the yeares of dearth, when all others wanted, he abounded: when the Egyptians themselves that sowed the corne were ready to perish for want of corne: he with his household was plentifully provided for amongst them, and that for nothing.

2

Terror for them whose whole happinesse doth hang on their riches, though they bee full now, they may quickly bee emptied, and though they seeme to want nothing, the curse of god may speedily bring them to be destitute of euery thing. So did *Mary* sing by the spirit of God in her song of reioycing, *Luke 1. 53. Hee hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich hee hath sent empty away.* And so did *Hanna* also praise the Lord for the same. *1. Sam. 2. 5. They that were full, are hyred forth for bread, and the hungry are no more hired.* A great alteration was made in their states on both sides. The poore which laboured in other mens woorke for wages were sufficiently provided for at home, and the rich and wealthie which were maisters ouer many, were compelled by need to frame themselves to bee other mens seruants.

Verse. 4.

A deceitfull hand maketh poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

This verse also containeth an answer to an other obiection, which might rise out of the words immediately going before: if food and maintenance be the gift of God, and they that haue little shall be kept from want, and they that haue great store shall bee stript of all, to what end should men trauell and take paines? the wisest way is to giue ouer all labour. Now this hee refuteth by shewing the meanes whereby righteous men vse to receiue this food and provision from Gods hand, and that is by sedulitie and diligence in their vocations. And therefore he demonstrateth the contrary effects of contrary men, namely, of slothfull persons, and such as be industrious, and painefull. Slothfull persons fall into two euils, the one is the practise of deceitfulness, called heere a deceitfull hand, the

the other is the burthen of pouertie, which is a punishment inflicted vpon them, both for fraud and idlenesse. They that bee diligent haue their reward yeilded vnto them, that they thrive, and prosper by the labour of their hands: and though their wealth bee not so great in quantitie, yet the smalnesse thereof is recompensed in qualitie, and good vse of it, and therefore is called precious riches. Chap. 12. 27. And so they haue neither neede nor disposition to giue themselves to deceitfull shifts, as sluggards.

A deceitfull hand, &c. False dealing is no profitable trade to gaine by, it rather hurteth then helpeth them that vse it. Tending to this purpose are many Parables in this booke, as Chap. 13. 11. The riches of vanitie shall bee diminished, they may bee gotten, but not long kept, and though they perish not, nor bee taken away all at once, yet they will consume and bee wasted by degrees. And as this euent is heere declared to come vpon euill gotten goods, so in an other place hee telleth the miserie that shall ouertake the men themselves, that so fish for them. Chap. 19. 15. *A deceitfull person shall bee affamished.* As wealth will forsake them, so friends will faile them, and God will curse them, and pouertie will oppresse them.

First, the Lord doth hate, and curse both deceit, and deceiuers, as being abomination vnto him, and therefore his displeasure will kindle a fire in their estate to consume them.

Secondly, consider from whence very often this deceitfulness proceedeth, from idlenesse and remissnesse of men in their callings, as many texts doe testifie, and the antithesis especially, and opposition in the two places before alleadged. Now if single sloathfulness of it selfe will so eate vp a mans estate, as heereafter is to bee shewed, much more when it hath such a companion to take part with it. And for experience heereof, looke vpon gamesters, and cousoners, and shifters, and all such kinde of people, and see whether their owne negligence, and vniust courses doe not like hungry and greedy beastes deuour and swallow vp all their portions.

Iij.

Thirdly,

Doct. 1.
Guiles bring
no gaine.

Reasons. 2.

2

3

Thirdly, it is a righteous thing with God so to requite them with penurie, that by fraud, and falschoode seeke to bring other men to it.

Vc. i.

Instruction, if wee bee visited with beggerie or needinesse (the burden of pouerty pressing vs so heauily that wee can not well beare it) let vs examine our owne courses, and call our waies to account, to see whether our owne fraud and guile haue not brought such a guest to our houses: and so doing, wee shall turne the poyson vnto a medicine, and that which is to others a iudgement, may bee to vs a singular mercy to draw vs to repentance, from such vnrighteous behaiour.

2

Secondly, wee be yet spared from the stroak of God, that he hath not arrested our substance being forsaited by falschoode, nor depriued vs of the same. Let vs then speedely preuent the punishment by breaking off the sinne by repentance, by mercie, by reformation and restitution to the right owners, so far as possibly wee shall be able.

3

Reproofe of their folly which hope to enrich themselves by deceit and wrongfull dealing, trusting to rise by that which bringeth others to a fall, and to turne that to a gaine, which is to others a losse. But by triall they shall bee taught, that they may as well looke to thriue by vnthrifinesse, as to increase their stock by deceit: or profit themselves by rapine, and wrong doing.

Jerem. 5. 27.

Obiect. But it appeareth that their successe is correspondent to their expectation, the euent proueth that they make a gaine of it. The Prophet testifieth, that as a cage is full of Birds, so their houses are full of deceit, and thereby they are become great, and waxen rich.

Ier. 17. 11.

Answer. They may get things into their hands, and yet be preuented of the fruition of them. They may haue them for a time, and lose them at the last, as the same Prophet also teacheth: as the Partridge gathereth, or layeth egges, and hatcheth not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right shall leaue them in the midst of his daies, and in the end dye like a foole. They haue not a broode of comforts, so soone as they sit vpon their nest of riches, they may be trodden vpon, or adde,

dle, or eaten vp. Euill may befall them beefore they can doe them any good, or if their goods remaine, themselues may soone be remoued from their goods: and in the meane time haue the crosse of God on soule, & bodie, which is much more grieuous, then to be smitten in outward estate.

But the hand of the diligent, &c. They greatly help their owne estate that are painefull, and faithfull in their vocations. Among many testimonies whereby this point is confirmed, that is to be noted which is in the 13. Chapter of this booke. *The soule of the diligent shall haue plentie, or be made fat,* as the word signifieth. Where though by soule he vnderstandeth the whole man, yet that part is not named in vaine. Their bodie, and outward man shall haue inough, and the soule and inward man shall be content and satisfied with inough, and much refreshed by it.

Doct. 2.
A man faith-
full in his cal-
ling betters
his estate.
Prouerb. 13. 4.

First, it is appointed to man by the decree of God, not onely as a dutie to trauell, and labour, but also as a portion to eate his bread thereby, and inioy the fruit of his labour, *Gen. 3. 19. Psal. 128. 2.*

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, diligence, and painefulnesse, is a seruice to God, and they that here haue the promise made to them, are such as performe their works in conscience, and obedience to his will, & therefore may wel be assured of allowance to maintain them. As for such as work for the worlds sake, in pride, and couetousnesse, or vpon coaction and necessitie, or for any other sinister respect, they may be said to be great doers that medle in much dealing, but nothing diligent: and therefore it is no maruell, though all their toyle and trauell doe seldome take any good effect.

2

Thirdly, their paines and labours are for the common good, they serue for the vse and profit of mankinde, (for they that spinne the spiders web, and are more busie then well occupied, are not to be counted in the number of these) and therefore shall not faile of the benefit of it themselues.

3

Fourthly, faithfull imployment, and paines taking is a medicine against pride, and helpeth to worke humilitie, and therefore maketh ready the way for all good prosperitie.

4

Lij.

Fifty,

Fifthly, by this meanes they are kept from vicious companions, and sinfull exercises, and all kinde of such vnthrifue courses, as whereby the states of many men come to vtter ruine and ouerthrow.

Vse.

Instruction to all degrees from the highest that sitteth on the throne, vnto the lowest that clenseth the chanel, or grindeth at the mill, that every one attend with heedelesse to the duties of his calling without remission, or negligence. Art thou great, and substantiall, as we vse to say? take this way to increase thy greatnesse, and inlarge thy substance, and as the multitude of riches and titles doth not diminish thy liking and estimation of them, so let it not abate thy industrie and diligence in any seemely seruices. And thou which art poore, and of inferiour place, let it not repent thee to trauaile in woorkes that others peradventure would disdain to exercise, but proceede in hope, and know for thy comfort that in all labour there is abundance. Chap. 14. 23. And albeit now thou art at the commandement of others, and according to their wils art wholly vsed in their woorkes, yet remember that the hand of the diligent shall beare rule. Chap. 12. 14. From a seruant thou maist grow to bee a master, from a labourer or hireling, thou maist attaine to be an officer, and haue others at thy commandement. But whatsoeuer thy state proue to be amongst men, assure thy selfe of the reward of inheritance from God, for thou seruest the Lord Christ. Col. 3. 24.

Verse. 5.

Hee that gathereth in sommer is a sonne of vnderstanding. and hee that sleepeth in haruest is a sonne of confusion.

The drift of these wordes is to teach men to redeeme the time and make the best aduantage of the seasons, comparing oportunitie to sommer or haruest, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and ready to be gathered; and the persons to whom it is offered, to husbandmen that haue commodities growing in the fields. And therefore we iudge him prudent which so stirreth himselfe, and hasteneth his people to cut downe his corne.

corne, and to inne it when it is ripe, and the weather is seasonable: so God heere calleth him a sonne of vnderstanding, that is, a wise man which taketh time while time serueth, for any good purpose and occasion. And as the world cryeth, sie on him that sleepeth in haruest, that is, doth no more labour or looke to his affaires, then if hee were in a dead sleepe, and so sustaineth the losse of all his croppe, by meanes whereof hee ouerthroweth the state of all his familie: so the Lord termeth him a sonne of confusion, or which bringeth confusion, that is to say, misery, and shame vpon himselfe, and his friends, which striueth not to take his part of Gods blessing in due season,

It is a matter of great importance to make our vse of a good oportunitie when it is offered. The example of the Ant is to that end proposed. *Chap. 30. 25.* That we might learn of the vnreasonable creatures, and those which are also of no account and reckoning. They are led onely by sence, and instinct of nature, we haue reaso that may perswade to it: they haue none to giue them admonitio, or to call vpon them: we haue guides to direct vs and the word of God seriously instructing vs in the duetie. And that is there commended in them, which incomparably will be more effectuell in Christians: namely, that wisdom supplyeth the defect of strength, and prouidence effecteth that which other things cannot bring to passe by their power.

Examples heereof we haue in *Iosaph*, who in the time of great plentie, prouided against the yeares of scarcitie: and in the Church of Antiochia, who beeing foretold of the famine to come, made prouision beefore hand for the Saints of Ierusalem.

First, it is a thing pleasing to God to accept of his gifts when his gracious hand doth reach them out vnto vs: and very offensive to him when we put by the fauour and kindenesse that he maketh offer of. For he taketh it, either as a contempt of the things which he would bestow: or as contolement of his wisdom, as though he did not see far inough into the fitnessse of euery season.

Secondly, the euent that fall out on both sides doe make this manifest: they that open their hands to receiue, when

Doct.
Oportunitie
not to be omitted.

Reasons. 1

2

God

God openeth his to giue, they that are prepared to accept with thankfulness, as hee is ready to bestow in mercie, such shall haue the blessings of God confirmed vnto them with new-blessings; and to them will he communicate much and often, and that which is excellent, which vse speedy intertainment to his graces. But on the other side when men hold him off with delaies, and grow nice, and coye, and turne his benefits backe vpon him, they shall be soone rid of them, and stript of all his mercies: they shall call and cry at another time and haue no answere, they shall search and seeke, and finde no successe, they shall feelee their wants, and faile of supply to releue them.

Vfe.

Reproofof them that be euill husbands for themselves, in the things of this present life, pretermittin the precious time of getting skill in any profitable trade or science, and onely learne the art of vanitie, and bee many yeares apprentices to dogs, and dice, and hawkes, and boules, and to euery ruffianly companion, that shall teach them to swagger, and sweare, to swill, and quaffe, and play all the parts of professed Atheists. And so at last (their wits beeing worne out for want of wisdom, which would haue preserued them, their strength consumed in striuing to doe mischief, and age perishing in them as neuer yeelding fruite to themselues, or any others) they come to that condiction as did the vagabonds that *Iob* speaketh of, that every man will be readie to prefer his dogs before them (as in equire it is fit for the master to take the better hand of the seruant) and to let his very dunghill haue preheminence aboue them. Their wretched and cursed courses in mispending their time do worke them the fulnesse of woe and misery, and make them odious and hatefull to God and godly men, and to ciuill men, and burthenous and loathsome to vngodly and sinfull men. Secondly, of them that be vnthristie for their soules, which neuer apply themselues to prepare for another life, before they be departing out of this. They doe not once thinke of seeking heaven and euerlasting saluation, vntill they bee sinking into hell, and perpetuall perdition. They imagine that earthly things will require long labour to compasse them, but pietie, and grace, repentance, and faith, may be gotten in a mo-

ment :

ment : they be ready at their will, and their will will be flexible to their wish, and neither abilitie, nor will, nor wish will be wanting at the time of their deatnes. Oh miserable men, how long will their eyes be blinded ? How long will their hearts be hardned ? do they not perceiue that sinne and Sathan haue power ouer their affections and desires, and purposes, and will, and all the faculties of their whole soules ? Euen this maketh it cleare that it is so, because they doe not perceiue it to be so. And if their soules be in such bondage and subiection, and held at the wil of the diuell, that now in their fresh age & health (their senses being more capable of instruction, and the ministerie of the word readie to yeeld instruction) that they cannot attaine to sound and godly sorrow, and conuersion : let them not deceiue themselves, as though in sicknesse, and paine, and dotage, and sencelesenesse, and affected blindnesse of minde, they can by their owne disposition returne sincerely to the Lord.

*Blessings are vpon the head of the righteous : but iniquitie
shall couer the mouth of the wicked.*

Verse. 6.

Blessings, That is, all kinde of happinesse, every good gift of God that is fitte for them, as peace, plentie, grace, and health, &c All shall be vpon the head of the righteous, meaning vpon the whole soule and body of every faithfull holy man. And they are said to be on the head, because they come downe from aboue, and light as it were vpon the head, and so discend to the other parts. But iniquitie, the vengeance of God executed for violence and sinne, shall couer the mouth of the wicked, shall take away all excuses, and defences from him. Now heere is somewhat vnderstoode in the former clause, and expressed in the latter : and somewhat expressed in the latter, and to be supplied in the former. Blessings are vpon the head of the righteous, and therefore doe open his mouth, viz, to praise God, and maintaine his owne innocencie, and iudgements (called here violence or iniquitie, by a metonymie of the cause) they are vpon the head of the wicked, and so close vp their mouth.

K.

Blessings

Doct. 1.
Blessednes is
the greatest
gift of God to
his seruants.

Blessings, &c. The greatest reward that God doth giue to his seruants in this life, is to blesse them. That is very ordinarie with the Prophets in the Psalmes, and other places of Scripture in wishing well to the Church, to pray for this, and in gratulations to commend it, and in thankfulnessse to God to acknowledge it. As in the fift Psalm, ver. 12. desiring the comfort and ioy of faithfull men, and praying the Lord to worke it in them, he sheweth what iust cause, they had to bee so affected: *For thou Lord (saith hee) wilt blesse the righteous, and with fauour wilt compass him as with a shield.*

Reason. 1.

First, such blessings as are heere spoken of, be sure testimonies of Gods loue, and proceede meereley from his gracious goodnesse, they are infallible pledges of his fauour, as it appeareth in the wordes of the Psalm last quoted.

2

Secondly, they be prerogatiues peculiarie appropriated to godly men, for saith hee in an other place: *Saluation belongeth to the Lord, and thy blessing is vpon thy people.* It is alwaies accompanied with saluation, none are blessed but such as are saued, and none are either blessed or saued, but such as are the people of God.

3

Thirdly, they haue all good things infolded in them which readilie according to our neede are ministred vnto vs. *Deut. 28.*

4

Fourthly, Gods blessings doe season all prosperitie, and the gifts that it bringeth, and maketh them comfortable and all aduersitie, and maketh it profitable, whereas the curse doth poyson both to the wicked.

¶ 1.

Instruction that whereas we desire to haue the Lord poure this heavenly gift vpon vs, so let vs obserue the condicions that he doth prescribe to them which shall receive it. Let vs get holinesse into our hearts, and blessings cannot chuse but bee vpon our heads: let righteousnessse haue place in our actions and behauiour, and peace will haue force in our soules and bodies.

2

Consolation to all true hearted Christians that haue this blessed gift of Gods blessing. Hee that may truely be said to possesse the blessing, cannot possibly say how much he doth possesse. The varietie of his treasure is vspeakeable: his substance

stance exceedeth all estimation : his inheritance is endlesse, and without all bounds and limits. Though wee should be as much molested with malicious men, as *Danid*, and *Paul* were, and as much assaulted by *Sathan* and tryed by Gods owne hand, with losses, or bodily infirmities, as *Iob* was; yet if we be blessed of God as they were, what caule can there be of feare, or grieve, or discontentment? The blessing bringeth strength for supportance in them: the blessing bringeth issue and deliverance out of them, the blessing worketh the right vse of them: the blessing yeeldeth a plentiful reward, of comfort and good prosperitie in this life, and of glorie and everlasting happinesse in the life to come.

When God entreth into iudgement with wicked men, hee will cause the plague so to manifest their sinnes, that they shall not bee able to denie them. Though hipocrites can make the greatest shew, and vsuallie bee most forward to speake for themselves: yet when God found out the dissembler in the Gospell, and called him to a reckoning for intruding himselfe to his feast without a wedding garment, he was stricken dunne and speechlesse, hee could plead nothing for himselfe. *Haman* standing onely before the minister of Gods vengeance, hauing beene before that time his greatest friend, yet when *Hester* accused him of his false and cruel practices: he stooode mute, and could not reply. He that attempted to stop the mouth of *Mordocai*, had his owne mouth stopped with his violence. And therefore when God himselfe commeth to indite men, and to set their sinnes in order before them, all mouthes shall be stopped, and all the world shall be culpable before him. No sinful and vnregenerate person which hath no right to plead Christs merits, can possibly speake any thing to iustifie himselfe.

First, that the Lord may haue his words verifird to be all true and righteous, & his dealings also iust and holy. *Psal. 51. 4.* And for this cause howsoeuer sinfull men haue their mouthes shut vp at his iudgements that they can say nothing for themselves, yet he doth sometimes open their mouthes, to draw out a confession against themselves, as in the case of *Iudas*, and *Pharao* and *Adonibezek*. *Mat. 27. 4. Exod. 9. 27. Iudges. 1. 7.*

K. ij.

Second-

Dof. 1.

Wicked mens
sin shall bring
them to shame

Mat. 22. 12.

Hest. 7. 6.

Pfal. 50. 11.

Rom. 3. 19.

Reasons. 1.

2 Secondly, in regard of the elect sinners, that seeing the sin and punishment mixed together, and themselves guiltie of the one, and worthie of the other, they may be humbled, and driuen to repentance. So were *Iosephs* brethren frighted, and brought to make this confession: what shall we speake? and how shall we iustifie our selues? God hath found out the wickednesse of thy seruants. *Gen. 44. 16.*

3 Thirdly, it maketh the torments of the reprobate to be exceeding fearefull and terrible.

4 Fourthly, it is for admonition to others to take heede by their examples. This hath *Zachary. Chap. 1. 4. 5. 6. &c.* *Be not like your fathers that would not heare the former Prophets. Where are your fathers? Did not my words take hold of them? and they returned and said, as the Lord hath determined to doe vnto vs, according to our owne wayes, and workes, so hath hee done.*

5 Fifthly, for the ioy and comfort of Gods people, seeing the Lord vndertaking their cause, and executing his wrath vpon their enemies.

Vlc. 1.

Admonition, not to aduenture to commit such sinnes as wee can cloake, and coulour by denials, defences, excuses, or extenuations: or if wee haue that way faulted already; let vs speede our confession, least the Lord hasten his plagues to compell vs vnto it, or if wee will not bee brought to acknowledge them our selues, the iudgements and curses which he will send forth, shall openly publish and declare them. And therefore it is good to iudge our selues, that hee may spare vs: to open our mouthes for a free confession, and to shut them from lessening of our offences. So did *Iob. Chap. 39. 37. Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I spoken, but I will answer no more, yea twise, but I will proceede no further.* And that grace doth God promise to his people by the Prophet *Ezechiell. I will establish my couenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, that thou mayest remember, and be ashamed, and neuer open thy mouth any more: because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.*

Ezechi. 16.
62, 63.

The

*The memoriall of the iust shall bee blessed: but the name
of the wicked shall rotte.*

Verse. 7.

This is one perticular of the blessings mentioned in the former verse, that that which is dearest to a man, as his name, shall bee in estimation, and good account. The remembrance and mention of him being absent aliue, and when hee is dead, shall bee acceptable, and with his praise and commendation: But the name of the wicked is cursed, and therefore had in hatred, and detestation, euen as much loathed as the stinke of his carcassee, that lyeth rotting in the graue.

The credite and honour of good men will grow to be better, and the reputation of sinners will bee turned into shame. Onely godly men haue good names, and it is one difference that God putteth betweene them and the wicked, that they bee blessed heerein peculiarly, and all others excluded from the benefit of it. Such a threatning doth *Isaías* denounce against the wicked: *You shall leaue your name as a curse to my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay you and call his seruants by a new name.* Though sinfull men bee magnified of sinners, yet they shall bee made abominable to Saints, and that is the greatest reproach: and though good men bee despised of the world, yet God will giue them glory, and increase it, and vouchsafe the titles, not onely of his seruants, but euen of his owne children.

Doct.
Good men
grow in credite
but sinners
glory ends in
shame.

First, they all, and none but they, are in credite with God and good men, and that onely is to be accounted true honour.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, the graces of sound hearted Christians, will more and more appeare, and shine out, and the secret finnes of hypocrites, and other euill men will bee discouered, and brought to light, and both sorts shall haue estimation in time, according to their behauiour. 1. Tim. 5. 24. 25.

Thirdly, glorie is an vnseperable companion of goodnesse: and so is shame of sinne: for God hath ioyned them together, and therefore hee that hath one of them cannot bee without the other.

3

Vfr. 1.

Psal. 49. 11. 12.

Confutation of their error, that hope to be come honorable, and famous, and to leaue a name behinde them, by fleshly courses: some by getting much, and raising vp their houses, and performing great exploitcs. But the vnhappie successe of their vaine expectation, is noted in the Psalmes, that though they thinke their houses and habitacions shall continue from generation, to generation, and call the lands by their names, yet they shall not continue in honour, but perish like beasts that dye of the murraine. Who in all the world preuailed like to *Nabucadnezzar*, in *Nabucadnezzars* time, and yet howsoeuer he was applauded and admired, at the first, he was derided and exploded at the last, and made a proverbe, and parable of reproach? Some by fine wit and policie, and dexteritie in speaking. But let *Achisophel*, and *Herod* be examples to these, the one in counsell was wonderfull deepe, and his speeches were as oracles, and yet wee repute him not to be a man of famous memory, but behold in him the very image and figure of infamie. The other for his eloquent oration, was desired of the people, and with a concordant acclamation extolled for a god; but yet as God layd a present stroke vpon his bodie, and deliuered his life into the power of base vermin, to gnaw out his bowells: so he layd a continuall curse vpon his name, which will cleaue vnto it for euer. Some others by hipocrisie, and pretence of mercie and pittie: and yet with out all conscience or loue of either. But praise so purchased, is subiect to staines and losse of colour. The Pharisees had obtained the opinion of goodnesse, godlinesse, righteousnesse, and of all vertue. They were almost of all men, thought to be the most holy men: and can there now bee a greater indignitie offered to a man then to call him a Pharisee? for that name carrieth in it the perfect paterne of pride, hipocrisie, and palpable dissimulation.

2

Consolation to righteous men that God vndertaketh the protection, of their names: it is not in the power of any creature to spoyle them of their credit and reuerence: it is as surely preserved as their saluation, as their life is euermlasting: so is the amiable remembrance of them. *Psal.* 112. 6. The Prophets, and Apostles, and Christ himselfe, and good men in their

their times were euill spoken of, and now haue a most blessed memoriall. And so of latter yeares, it was a great dignitie to be a *Wolsey*, or a *Gardiner*, or others that weere of great place, and cruell disposition, but now wee reuerence the names of *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, *Bradford*, and the meanest of them that suffered for the Gospell of Christ, though they were then condemned for heretikes. The Apostle *Peter* encourageth vs to be bold and cheerefull though we should be railed vpon for Christ his sake: for the spirit of God is a spirit of glory, and that is giuen to vs and resteth vpon vs, and who shall remoue it from vs? *Naboths* name was in great hazard to be blemished, when hee was conuicted, and executed for treason, and blasphemie, and no meanes least in appearance, to cleare his innocencie: yet God knowing it, hath made vs to know it, and the short shame that he bare for a time, is turned to a durable honour through all generations.

The wise in heart will receiue commandements: but the foolish in talke shall be beaten.

Verse. 8.

The wise in heart, &c. That is, such as haue sauing knowledge, and conscience, will receiue commandements, will heare and obey the word of God without replies, and cauels, against it: but the foolish in talke, he that abuseth his lips to murmuring and friuolous obiections: shall bee beaten, that is, shall be plagued for his contempt.

The sence will be plaine, if the supply be made in both clauses of the opposition, in this manner: The wise in heart will readily receiue commandements, and therefore shall be rewarded: but the foolish in heart will bee foolish in talke to recieft commandements, therefore shall be punished.

We ought to be tractable to the will of God, without resisting or gainsaying. To this duetie Saint *James* doth admonish vs saying: *Let every man be swift to heare, and slow to speake*: his meaning is not to perswade men to come sodainely, and rashly to the word without preparation: but to hearken desirously, with reuerence and attention when they are prepared, and

Doct.
Men must obey where
God comma-
nds.
James. 1. 19.

and not to picke quarrels against that which is deliuered, vnaduisedly and out of a distempered affection, but vpon mature deliberation with a minde willing to be resolu'd, to propose their doubts.

Reasons, 1.

First, the Lord hath absolute authoritie ouer vs, and therefore he iustly may lay his commandements vpon vs.

2

Secondly, his whole will, and all his waies are perfectly righteous, and therefore to take exception against them must needes be vnrighteous.

3

Thirdly, they are altogether full of wisdom, and therefore none but fooles will presume to charge them with folly.

Vic. 1.

Instruction to cast off, and remoue away the sinfull lusts of our hearts, the fleshly discourse of carnall reason, and the resolute and felled purpose of any wicked way. For all these will imbitter the soule, and whet the tongue to withstand and resist the holy commandements of God. *Iames. 1. 21. 1. Pet. 2. 1. Jer. 44. 16. 17.*

2

Reprooffe of them that are willing to receive the promises of God, but not the commaundements: or if they doe, it is in such things as bee agreeable to their owne will, or at least not contrary to it. So they dealt with *Jeremiah*, ntreating him to declare vnto them, all that the Lord should say, and they would doe it, and they would haue beene as good as their word, if he had encouraged them to take their voyage into Egypt, whither they were bent to goe: but when he disswaded them from it, by expresse prohibition and threatnings, they grew to another point, that it was not God which spake that, but *Jeremie*, and *Jeremie* did not speake truly, but falsely, and it was not of himselfe, but from *Baruch*, and *Baruch* had no good meaning in it, but to deliuer them into the hands of the Chaldeans, to be slaine, or carryed away captiues. *Jer. 43. 2. 3.*

Jer. 42. 10.

3

Consolation for them that submit themselves to learne and obey the doctrine of gods will, though it many times do crosse them in their affections, and desires, in their reason and conceits, in their pleasures and delights, in their profits and commodities: this manifesteth true wisdom, this declareth a faithful heart, this giueth a cleere testimony of sinceritie. The rich young

young man attained not to this, nor Herod went so far though he did many things by *Iohns* perswasion, yet hee would not wholly conforme himselfe as to the will of God, to doe every thing, or to leaue every thing according as he required. *Mat. 19. 22. Mar. 6. 17. 18. 20*

Terrour for the braue gallants of our age which exercise their ripe heads, and fresh wits in wrestling with the truth of God, and take it for a glory to giue it a foyle. But howsoeuer their prompt wits, & ready tongues together with art, and *Sathans* assistance, may sometimes perplexe and trouble a poore Christian, yet shall they nothing preuaile against Christ, and his veritie, nor gaine any thing at his hands, but shame and punishment. It were safer for them to incounter with tenne *Sampsons* then to try their manhoode with one point, or article of Gods holy doctrine. But their case is worst of all, which obstinately, peruersely, and of wilfull malice doe reiect all that is taught them out of the word. It is in vaine to admonish them, as the Prophet saith, *Hos. 4. 4. Thy people are as they that rebuke the Priest*: that is, presumptuous persons, sinning with an high hand, in refusing to heare, or be directed by the Priest, then of the law. *Dent. 17. 12.* or to giue eare to the ministers of the Gospel now: but contentiously disobey the truth, and so bring vpon their owne soules indignation, and wrath, tribulation, and anguish. *Rom. 2. 9.*

Hee that walketh vprightly, walketh boldly: but hee that peruerteth his waies, shall be knowne.

Verse. 9.

He that walketh vprightly, that is, doth carefully looke to his waies, with an honest heart, *walketh surely*, hauing both the affection, and ground, and effects of Christian bouldnesse: *but hee that peruerteth his waies*, that is, doth allow himselfe in any course, though neuer so secretly, *shall be knowne*, his sinnes shall be detected.

The fence of the whole verse may be thus expressed: *Hee that walketh vprightly, walketh surely*, because his faithfulness shall bee knowen to his praise; *And hee that peruerteth his*

L.

waies,

maies, walketh dangerously, because his lewdenesse shall bee knowne to his shame.

Doct.
He liues safely,
that liues
sincerely.

All sound safetie, and boldnesse proceedeth from sinceritie of heart, and integritie of life. Euery religious man that feareth the Lord, hath this promise *Psal. 112. 7. 8. That no euill tidings shall make him afraid, because he beleeneth in the Lord*: if all the world would tell him of perill, when God himselfe doth warrant him safetie, he will giue most credit to him that hath most truth, and most power also to dispose of all euent. And his heart is not as a pole that is pitched vp, or a stake that is sticke vp, which euery hand may plucke away, or euery blast of winde may blow downe, nor like a dry wall without a quoin or buttresse, or any other binding to fortifie it: but it is fixed and established as a tree that is well rooted, & groweth strongly, or a building that hath a sure foundation, and standeth fast, and so is freed from feare and all slauish terror.

Reasons. 1.

First, his heart hath Gods owne eye to behold it, and his spirit to testifie the faithfulness of it, and so receiueth comfort from him. *Iob. 31. 31.* whereas the hearts of hypocrites being searched by him, are found most fraudulent and deceitfull.

2

Secondly, the course of their actions is such as will indure light, and the more they are examined, the better they will prooue, and therefore they need not feare any might or malice, or cunning aduersaries that shal seeke their disgrace, *Isa. 50. 7. 8.* And though their enemies for a time doe falsely slander them, yet the Lord in due season will make their righteousness as cleare as the noone day. *Psal. 37. 6.*

3

Thirdly, their bodies and state are in Gods custodie, and he hath vndertaken the defence, and preservation of them. *Cap. 3. 26. Psal. 91.* whereas the wicked are out of Gods protection, and goe perpetually in perill.

4

Fourthly, their soules are prepared for death and the iudgement seate of Christ, and therefore more desire to bee dissolved, then are afraid to heare of the neerenesse of their dissolution, which is contrary in the wicked, who all their dayes are in bondage to the feare of death and damnation. *Heb. 2. 15.*

Vlc. 1.

Instruction to get apparant and euident testimonies of vpriht-

vprightnesse, which will make our liues comfortable, & keep off many miserable vexations, and horrors, that come vpon the wicked. And this wee shall doe, if wee labour to know all that God would haue vs to learne, & to indeuor to practise all that wee know, and to confesse to God all that we faile to practise: for so farre as wee are willingly ignorant of any dutie, or carelesse to performe it, or secure when we neglect it, & conceale our sinnes, not acknowledging them that the Lord may remit them: so far wee come short of a good conscience. Psal. 32. 1. 3.

Consolation, for all that be vpright, that whether they walk abroad, or stay at home: whether they be in company with others, or alone by themselues: whether it be in the day or in the night; whether they bee walking, or sleeping: they are well assured of certaine safetie. 2

Terrour for sinfull men, whose consciences be at all times readie to assaile them. Naturall courage will not help them in the time of extremitie: how many seeming very valient, as *Saul* for example, haue through desperate feare, laide violent hands vpon their owne bodies. And let power and courage concur to gether, yet both wilbe insufficient to strengthen a heart that Gods iudgement, and their owne guiltinesse doe weaken. As *Balthazzar* being bold to defie *Cyrus*, and to bid battell to the Lord himselfe, profaning his holy vessells in despight of him: yet now in the midst of iolitie, amongst his friends, in his owne house, in a strong cittie, garded with an hoast of armed souldiers, hee was so frighted, and terrified, that his countenance was changed, his heart was resolued into dastardlinesse, the ioyntes of his loynes were loosed, and his knees smote one against an other. And what was it that so danted him? the sight of an hand, writing vpon the wall. There were neither more enemies, nor fewer friends, nor any other alteration then beefore, but God wakened his conscience, and his conscience shewed him his guiltinesse, and altogether threatned his destruction, and heereby his great courage was so quickly killed. And this also may serue to take away the vaine confidence of foolish men that be bold to commit iniquitie, & yet looke to escape the reproach of it: hoping

neuer to be found out. But they forget that the Apostle saith that mens sinnes come to light in diuers maners, some presently vpon the fact, some long after: some in their life time, some after they be dead, some referred to the last day: but so that all shall certainly be manifested one day. *Caine* had as faire possibility and likelihood to couer his crueltie, as ever any sinner had, or possibly can haue to conceale his offences, no man but himselfe knowing of it, no circumstances beeing to sift it out by, if hee would keepe his owne counsell; and yet what fact almost is more notoriously knowen, and published, and that with detestation, then his murdering of *Abel*? And it is not to be imputed to his owne sillinesse, or carelesnesse of his name and credit, as though negligently he had discovered it himself; for he would haue hid it from the Lord, & consequently from all men, if he could haue so carryed the matter.

Verse, 10.

Hee that winketh with the eye worketh sorrow : and hee that is foolish in talke shall bee beaten.

Ioh. 13. 24.

This confirmeth the latter clause of the former verse, that they that peruert their waies shall bee knowne, though they doe it neuer so secretly : which is meant by the winking of the eye. Yet by this it shall appeare that it is knowne, because it shall bee punished. For as they practise mischief against others, and many times worke them sorrow : so they certainly bring mischief on their owne heads, and procure sorrow to their owne soules. And yet all winking is not condemned : but that which tendeth to hurt : when men winke wiles. The Apostle bekned or winked at *Iohn* that hee should aske who it was that should betray Christ, & yet this was well done of him; for he shewed a reuerend regard of Christ, that he would not bee lowd and audacious in his presence. If they peruert their waies openly by beeing foolish in speech, open iudgement shall bee executed vpon them for their open sinnes, and thereby their mouthes shall bee stopped.

Dost.
Sinne must
haue no slow-
ance,

It is not safe to vse any member of the body, or any gesture though neuer so closely, to commit sinne. The sonnes of
Beliall,

Beliall, vnthrifitie persons, are so described by their behauiour, and threatned to bee punished. Chap. 6. 12. 13. 14. 15. Hee walketh with a froward mouth, hee maketh a signe with his eyes, hee signifieth with his feete, hee instructeth with his fingers, &c. Therefore shall his destruction come speedely: hee shall bee destroyed suddenly without reuerie.

They are markes and messengers of a sinfull heart within, as in the same Chap. ver. 14. *Lewde things are in his heart, hee imagineth euill at all times.* Reasons. 1

Secondly, great hurt is done by such gestures and speeches, and other like behauiour. 2

Thirdly, the members of our bodies, as eyes, and tongue, and such like, were created for the seruice of God, and are required to bee weapons of righteousnesse against sinne, and not of sinne, against God and his righteousnesse. *Rom. 6. 19.* 3

To looke well to euery one of them, that none of them be in pay with Sathan, or lust, or mallice, to fight the battailes of the flesh, against the word and spirit of God. The Lord forbiddeth to set a foote towards the breach of the Sabbath, or to smite with the fist of wickednesse, or to lift vp a finger to crueltie or hard dealing. *Isay. 58. 4. 9. 13.* Vñ 1.

Terrour for them that haue the members of their bodies as armed rebels against the Lord, all following a sinfull heart which is their captaine and leader. 2

Consolation to the seruants of God, that the Lord beholdeth euery looke of the wicked aduersaries, euery beck, euery nod, and all their plots, and practises, and therefore euery one shall bee frustrate and defeated. And so the Lord heareth the boasts and insultations, the threatnings and slanders, and all kinde of hurtfull calumniationes, that are breathed out against his people, hee will take their cause in hand, and those virulent tongues that haue beaten others with false accusations, and lies, shall be beaten themselues with the rod of his vengeance, and the innocencie of the righteous shall bee cleared by the punishment inflicted vpon their enemies. 3

Verse. 11.

The mouth of a righteous man is a wellspring of life: but iniquitie conereth the mouth of the wicked,

In Israell, and in the countries bordering vpon it, it was a great benefit to haue wels of water, both for the vse of men and of the cattle, & therefore things of great account be many times compared to them in the Scriptures, and heere the mouth of a righteous man is so called in a double respect, both for the constancie of good conference (according to the similitude, for such springs as were continuall, and would hold out as well in Sommer as in Winter, were said to bee wells of liuing water. Gen. 26. 19.) as also, and especially for the good effect, that they be instruments sometimes to beeget, and vsually to confirme and refresh the life of the soule. The latter part of the verse hath bene expounded in the sixt verse.

The exposition standeth thus: The mouth of a righteous man doth flow alwaies with wholesome words, and therefore shall bee continued open with blessings: But the mouth of a wicked man doth flow alwaies with hurtfull words; and therefore shall be stopped with violence.

Doct.
Good men
haue euer
good wordes.

The mouth of the righteous, &c. A good man is neuer barren of good speeches. It is giuen as a precept by the Apostle to the Collosians. 4. 6. that their speech should bee alwayes gracious and poudred with salt, that is, holy and wholesome for the matter, and discrete and seasonable for the manner, which is not onely a commaundement deliuered by God, as a thing that ought to bee: but a duetie in exercise and practise with all godly Christians.

Reasons, 1

First, the law of the Lord is in their heart, and therefore they cannot choose but talke and confer of it. *Psal.* 37. 30. 31.

2

Secondly, their loue to God and the conscience of their dutie constraineth them to praise him for his word and nature, and workes: and to make his glory appeare vnto others.

3

Thirldy, they vse it as a meanes to refresh their owne harts, and to procure help by prayer, and such other exercises, for the supply of all their wants of soule and body.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, their loue to their brother and desire to haue men brought to euerlasting life, doth stia them to teach and exhort, to rebuke and admonish, to comfort and encourage, and euery way to help them to saluation.

Confutation of them who ascribe the abilitie of conference and prayer wholly to men of wit and learning, that therefore they can say nothing because their education, hath not beene in such exercises, it belongeth to preachers and ministers. But the holy Ghost doth impute it to righteousness heere, and to the efficacie and power of the spirit, *Zack. 12. 10. I will poure vpon the house of Dauid, and on the inhabitants of Ierusalem the spirit of grace and prayer*, hee saith not, they shall attaine vnto the art and methood of prayer which carnall men may get by carnall meanes, in the earth, but it is a blessing poured downe from aboue, as a gift from heauen, which onely his owne children haue descending vpon them, and all his people be replenished with it. It was not promised onely to the Priests, and Leuites, and Prophets, but to the house of *Dauid*, as in former times it had beene on *Dauids* owne person: and to the inhabitants of Ierusalem, as well as to the house of *Dauid*. Hee that saith expressly that hee cannot pray, saith also by consequence that he is not righteous, nor yet in case to bee saued. And hee that wanteth will and abilitie to talke Christianly, doth proclaime by silence, that he hath not the spirit of faith. *2. Cor. 4. 13.* More shall bee spoken of this point in the 13. Chap. 14. verse.

Hatred stirreth vp contentions: but loue conereth all trespasses.

Verse. 22.

Hatred, and all vncharitable affections, as enuie and wrath, *stirreth vp strife*, worketh all kind of reuenge and mischief, as backbiting, obbrayding with former faults, and very often procureth iniust criminations. *But loue conereth all trespasses*, by forgiuing them and reprouing them in friendly manner, and by concealing them from all those, to whom the knowledge of them hath not come, or doth not appertaine.

The

The opposition is thus framed: Hatred stirreth vp contentions, and blazeth abroad mens infirmities, but loue seeketh peace and couereth all trespasses.

Dost.
An ill heart
raiseth con-
tention.

Hatred. The actions and speeches of men are not so much a cause of strife and debate, as the euill affections of their hearts. Diuers times it falleth out that the wrong doer, is not so much faulty as he that shold better beare it: & no iniuries could work a quarrelous contention, vnlesse there were a defect of loue on both sides. It is said, Chap. 18. 6. *That a fooles lippes come with strife.* It is not the occasion giuen, so much as the lips that make the breach: and the lips could not doe it, vnlesse the man set them on worke, and the man would not so set them on worke, vnlesse folly and sin ouerruled both him and his lips, So Chap. 15. 18. Angry men are brought in for the authors of strife, but hee that is slow to wrath hath this testimonie giuen him, that he will appease it. What was the reason why *Iosephs* brethren had such a quarrell at him? Beecause they saw their father loue him more then all the rest, they hated him, and could not speake peaceably to him. *Gen.* 37. 4. What moued *Ahab* to be alway so bitter against *Elijah* and *Micaiah*? Hee telleth the cause himselfe, he hated them, and reputed them to bee his enemies. *1. Kings.* 21. 20. & 22. 8.

Reasons. 1.

First, wherefoeuer hatred is, & one man maligneth another, there is pride, and onely by pride contentions come. Chap. 13. 10.

2

Secondly, if strife did not more proceede from the inward corruptions, then the outward occasions, they that were most wronged, should necessarilie be most contentious, and so *Moses*, and *David*, and *Ieremie*, and *Paul*, and Iesus Christ himselfe of all other should haue beene most vnquiet and clamorous. But these had neuer any equall vnto them for peaceable and gentle behauiour. *Numb.* 12. 2. 3. *Math.* 12. 19. *1. Pet.* 4. 23.

Vic. 1.

Confutation of them that lay the blame of their frowardnesse vpon the vnkindenesse of their neighbours: and especially of such as charge the ministrie of the word, and the preachers of it with all the scismes, and seditions, and with all the breaches

breaches and diuisions that are in the Church. They publish the Gospell of grace which teacheth peace, and maketh peace betweene God and man, and betweene man and man, yea a man and his owne conscience. But would there bee to great oppositions, say they, and themselues and their doctrine so much crossed and resisted, vnles the cause were in them? They be troublesome men and busie bodies, giuen to faction, and no man can liue in peace by them. The Diuell cannot liue in quiet by them, and therefore hee maketh a tempest in their hearts whom hee possesseth, and so their waues dash against the ministers and all other good Christians. Our Saviour knew that such would bee the successe of his Gospell, that wicked men would bee in as great a hurlie burlie at it as if he had come with fire and sword against them. *Jeremie* cleareth Math. 10. 34. himselfe of all priuate occasions of discontentment amongst Jer. 11. 60. the people, hee neither borrowed on vsurie, nor lent on vsurie, nor had any trafficke or dealing with them; yet all contended against him, and euery man curled him. But what moued them to such passion and distemper? the Diuell and their owne sinfull hearts, which the Prophet so mightely warred against.

Instruction, if our hearts rise against our brethren, and begin to grow turbulent and vnpeaceable, that then wee call them to examination. As *S. James* doth them that would not James. 4. 1. examine themselues, from whence are these warres and contentions? are they not from lusts that fight in the members.

Not to trust enuious persons, for they haue not the gouernment of themselues, though they speak faire, and offer reconciliation. Yet if they cense not their soules of their inward ranker of malice, and that by repentance, they will breake out againe into bitterneesse, as *Saul* did against *David*.

But lone couereth, &c. Christian lone doth cause men to be mercifull to the soules & names of their brethren: which thing *Dr. A.* *Lone* is the Saint *Peter* teacheth, alleadging almost the very same words of least fault this scripture. *Above all things haue feruent lone amongst you, finder.* for lone couereth a multitude of sinnes. It hideth them all, though there be neuer so many.

None haue this lone, but such as haue felt Gods lone to them. *Reasons. 2.*
M. them.

themselves, remitting and couering their owne sinnes: and that maketh them mercifull to others. *Col. 3. 13.*

2 Secondly, they esteeme their brethren as their owne flesh, and members of the same body, and therefore will not willingly discouer the deformities, or vlcers, or the naked or vncomely parts thereof.

3 Thirdly, they propose a coppie or patterne to themselves, how themselves would bee dealt with in the like case, according to the rule of our Sauour, and the summe of the law and Prophets.

Vsc. 1.

Instruction to performe this dutie with faithfulness and good discretion to our neighbours. First, let vs take doubtfull things in the best part, for loue is not suspicious but hopeth well of things that may haue good construction, and peruertereth them not to the worst sence. So we deale with our children in their distempers, imputing them to some griping with winde, or breeding of teeth, or that some pinne pricketh them: it is meere necessitie that driueth vs to see their frowardnesse. Secondly, though it be a fault, yet if it be a small infirmite, and especially if it be a priuate wrong vnto ourselves, let vs passe by it, as the Lord doth most graciously with vs, whose children we must heerein declare our selues to bee in imitating of him: and it is a mans honour to passe by an offence. Thirdly, if there be an offence committed fit to be reproofed, let vs vse all holy lenitie, if it may preuaile, or seueritie in compassion to draw them out of their sinnes, for that is the best couering to bring them to repentance, that their iniquities may bee couered from Gods eyes, and washed away for euer. So did *Nathan* help to couer *Dauids* sinnes, and was the best instrument of his clearing, by his free & faithfull discouerie of them. Fourthly, if it belong not to our place to giue them admonition, or they receiue it not at our hands, then let vs shew their diseases to more skilfull Phisitions, and their wounds to better surgeons, as *Ioseph* told his father of his brethrens infamie. *Gen. 37. 2. 1. Cor. 1. 11.* and the house of *Cloe* shewed *Paul* of the dissensions of the Corinthians.

2 Reproofe of them that take it for their owne honour to bring

Ephe 5. 12.
Prou 20 3,

Iob. 23. 17.

Ia 5. 20.

Gen 37. 2.
1. Cor. 1. 11,

bring others vnto disgrace, they thinke that the blackenesse of their brethren will make them white, when they haue no goodnesse in themselves to helpe their credit, they goe about to dig it out of the dunghill of their neighbours corruptions.

Consolation to the seruants of God, that if the weake loue of creatures, that haue in them so great defect of loue, and pronenesse to hatred, be of such force as to hide their sinnes, which be further from them; how much more shall the infinite loue of God couer all their sinnes that are so neare vnto him. No man in his best loue to his best friend can either forgiue sinne, or worke repentance that sinne may bee foregiuen: But God can performe both, and hath bestowed vpon vs his Son, and his Sonne hath bestowed vpon vs his life and bloud to effect both.

3

In the lips of him that hath vnderstanding wisdom is found: but a rod shall be for the backe of him that is destitute of vnderstanding.

Verse. 13.

These words neede no further explanation, then the supply of that which is to bee vnderstoode in both the clauses. For this seemeth to be the sence of them: In the lips or speech of him that hath vnderstanding wisdom is found, which keepeth iudgements and punishments from him: but in the lips of him that wanteth vnderstanding folly is found, which bringeth iudgements and punishment vpon him. The first hemistich, or former part of the verse, is the same simply set downe, and without allegory, or metaphore, as was comparatiuely vttered in the eleuenth verse, by the similitude of a well spring.

The latter part is the same in sence, that was in the eighth, and tenth verses, for there it is said *that the foolish in talk shall be beaten.*

Verse. 14.

*Wise men lay vp knowledge : but the mouth of the foole is
a present destruction.*

Here is declared by what meanes wise men attaine to that abilitie, and sufficiencie of fruitfull speeches, by due attention to that which is spoken to them, or which they read : or by diligent obseruation of things which they behold. Those they lay vp, as a man would his treasure, in a safe place. As therefore a prouident thriftie husband which hath gathered together a stocke, will bee ready vpon short warning to make a purchase, or vpon any good occasion to disburse a summe of money : so he that is faithfull in seeking knowledge, and applyeth both heart and memory to hold it fast, and keepe it, shall readilie in conuenient time draw out the good things which he hath learned, either for his owne vse, or the benefite and profit of others. Which is contrary in carelesse and heedlesse persons : for they will be as forward to speake as any others, but that which is within the heart, will quickly bee at hand to come out at the lips, and that is poyson, and venome, and pestilent matter, which will certainly hurt themselves, and be dangerous to others. So then thus standeth the opposition : wise men lay vp knowledge, and therefore their mouths are a present preservation : but foolish men reiect knowledge and therefore their mouthes are a present destruction.

Doct. 1.
What good
the care layeth
in, that the
heart must lay
vp.

Wise men, &c. It is not inough to bring the eare to heare holy instructions, but the heart must also receiue and keepe them. The necessitie of this duetie appeareth by the serious exhortation which he giueth to that purpose in the beginning of the seuenth Chapter. *My Sonne keepe my wordes, and hide my commandements with thee : keepe my commandements, and thou shalt liue, and mine instruction as the apple of thine eyes.* Hee giueth this counsell as a friend, to a neare friend, as a father to his owne sonne, for the matter of it is not of small importance, but of the greatest weight and moment, it behooueth men not onely to lay sure hold of holy doctrines in regard of state, but of their very liues, And therefore not to looke to the
safe

safe keeping thereof as we are chary of our money, but to be as prouident that we be not spoyled of them, as we are watchfull to preferue the members, yea the dearest members of our bodies from violence.

First, the excellencie of wisdom and sauing knowledge may allure vs vnto it : for it is more precious and profitable then all earthly treasures, which earthly minded men hold vp so carelessly. Chap. 3. 14. 15. Reasons, 1.

Secondly, it concerneth our saluation, and euerlasting happiness, faithfully to retaine the holy word of God in our soules. 2
Heb. 2. 1. 3.

Thirdly, the store of grace that is congested doth minister matter, and oportunitie, and readinesse of good and wholesome speeches to the lips. *Psal. 49. 3. 4.* 3

Fourthly, by this meanes men are in their whole liues, both framed to be good, and declared to be good, and deliuered from all sinfull courses, that they may continue to be good. *Psal. 119. 11. Pron. 2. 10. 11.* And in this point the good ground in the Gospell, hath the preheminance aboue all the others, it receiue the word, and giueth entertainment vnto it by attention, and so it goeth beyond the high way. Secondly it hath a roote in it selfe, whereby it maketh a bold profession in the time of persecution, and so it goeth beyond the stony ground. Thirdly, it keepeth a constant course of obedience, and bringeth the fruit of the seede to ripnesse, and so it goeth beyond the thornie ground. 4

Reproofe of them which through the greedy desires of corruptible, and casuall treasures, are wholly withheld from seeking this one thing onely necessary. A great crop of wheat is offered vnto them, which they refuse, and fill their barnes and garners with chaffe and stubble. They may load themselves, and fill their houses with siluer, and gold, with pearles, and diamonds, and all kinde of precious stones : and they take their backe burthen, and pester their houses with old rustie iron, and drosse, and pebbles, and other things that be heavy and comberfome, but of no value. They haue libertie, and oportunitie, they haue perswasion, and encouragement to gather Vie. 1.
M. iij. ther

ther together, and store vp abundance of durable riches, which can neuer perishe, nor be taken from them, and they take paines to heape vp snow, and such like matter, that will melt away and vanish in a moment.

2

Terrour to them that suffer Sathan to rob them of all good lessons and instructions, and yet thinke that no hurt at all is done to them. If their houses had beene broken vp by men, and their money taken out of their chests, their neighbours should heare their clamours, and the whole countrie should heare their outcries, but let the diuell himselfe bereaue them of that portion which should not haue beene onely for liuing, but life, not for this present state, but their euerlasting state: in this case they be quiet, no wrong is offered to them, they haue sustained no manner of losse. It is set downe as a iudgement and curse by the Prophet, that men shall put their money into a broken bagge, and what a fearefull case stand they in then that put the sacred instructions of the blessed word of God into a bottomlesse heart, that can hold nothing, but that which will peruert and hurt them? The Apostle giueth an earnest caueat to the Hebrewes, admonishing them strictly to giue heed to the things which they heard, least they should let them slippe, and as the word signifieth, should leake or runne out. For it were better to haue wounds in our bodies that all our blood should gush out, then to be rifted vessels, hauing chinkes in our soules, that the doctrine of life should soake away, and oaze out from vs.

Hag. 16r

Heb. 2.1.

3

Consolation to them that haue couetous desires after spirituall dishes, that would suffer nothing that wayes to passe from them, but inlarge their affections vnfatiably to gather all. It is no point of folly, as it was in the rich man. *Luke. 12* to multiply worldly wealth, but these haue the Lord to commend their wisdom, and it may as truly be affirmed of them, as of such as be mercifull (because they bee the same persons, though the respects differ) that they lay vp store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtaine eternall life.

DoR. 2.

But the mouth of the wicked, &c. The tougues of vngodly men

men are alwaies pernicious and hurtfull. Of them Saint James An ill mans mouth worketh much woe. speaketh largely, comparing them to fire breaking out in an house, or whole towne, especially when it commeth by the hostility of the enemy, making assault to it, by meanes whereof men are stayed from extinguishing of it, and haue not onely their goods, but their life also in great perill. And this flame of the tongue is so much more dangerous then materiall fire, because it is kindled of hell, that is, the diuell himselfe hath set it on worke. And so in the same place he resemblenth them to poyson, and that not of the common sort, but to strong poyson, which is deadly, and faileth not to worke the bane of them that drinke it. Zac. 3. 5. 7.

First, they are hurtfull, and bring great annoyance, and mischief to other men, and therefore in the Scriptures, are called swords, and arrowes, and rasors, and mortall weapons. *Ier. 9. 8. Psal. 52. 2.* And yet such similitudes are not able fully to expresse, and set out the euill that commeth by venomous mouthes, and virulent speeches. First, the tongue most commonly causeth weapons to bee drawn, all warres, all rebellions, all massacres, all quarrels, all manner of strifes are first breathed out of mens mouthes, on some part. Secondly, the hand may be held that handleth the weapon, the strokes may be warded, armour may preferue from the violence of them, or there may be refuge and couert to hide them that are pursued: but who can stay an vnruely tongue? What defence is against it? whither shall a man fly from a false accuser? what distance of place will preuent malicious calumniation? Thirdly, they which fall into the hands of most fierce and cruell enemies, which are pearced, and wounded with keenest and sharpest edge tooles, haue all the hurt vpon their bodies, the extremitie of it reacheth but to take away their naturall life, but a slanderous tongue doth smite at the name, which an ingenuous man would forgoe his breath, to preferue: and a pestiferous seducing tongue doth peruert the soule, and by the poyson thereof are many thousands brought to euermlasting perdition.

Reasons. 1

Secondly, they bring destruction vpon themselves, and draw mischief

2

ecc. 10. 12. 13. mischief vpon their owne heads, as the Scripture testifieth : *The words of a wise man haue grace, but the lips of a foole deuoure himselfe. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishnesse, and the latter end of his mouth is wicked madnesse.* The truth of this shall be spoken of more at large in the eighteenth Chapter, and seauenth verse, vpon these words : *A fooles mouth is his owne destruction, and his lippes are a snare for his soule.*

Vse 1.

Pro. 13. 3.

Instruction to be very well aduised in all our speeches, si-
thens they are so important and weightie. Who would not
heedfully foresee where his arrow shall hit before he shoote
it out of his bow, least it should destroy any person, or other
creature through negligence ? who would not be very circum-
spect and wary in discharging of a peece, least hee should doe
mischief by it ? And yet by these a man may affray, and not
hurt; and hurt, and not kill; and kill, and not dye himselfe : but
what arrow ? what shotte ? what artillery ? what murdering
peece, is to bee compared to the mouth of a man that is not
guided by a wife and watchfull foresight ? Great woe it work-
eth to other men, but it surely bringeth death it selfe vnto him-
selfe, euery word that breaketh an other mans skinne, doth
certainely breake the kall of his owne heart : and he that doth
aime at an other to giue him a wound, can not misse himselfe,
to violate his owne life. For so wee learne in this booke. *Hee
that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth his lips
destruction shall bee to him.* It concerneth therefore euery man
to be as prouident, yea more carefull to looke to that which
goeth out of his lips, then to that which commeth in, to bee
more affraid to vtter blasphemous, reuiling, slaunderous and
infectious speeches, in regard of the soules; then to eate, and de-
uour vnwholesome meates in regard of the body. And by this
we are admonished to commit our mouthes to a better keeper
then our owne wit, or reason, or ciuill disposition, least Iust and
Sathan doe ouer rule vs, to let in what they will, and to let out
sinfull words, when, and whither, and as oft as they will. And
this moued the Prophet to pray to the Lord to set a watch
before his mouth, and to keepe the doore of his lips.

2

Confutation of them that thinke it nothing dangerous to
speake

speake whatsoeuer : words, they say, are but winde, when a man hath spoken he hath done, and so there is an end of that matter. Nay when a sinfull man hath spoken sinfully, much hurt is done, and so there is but the beginning of a bad matter: for all the mischief followeth after. So it may be said of a cup of poyson, it is but a draught, and when a man hath swallowed it, he hath done with it, and so there is an end : but hath it done with him ? will there be no further working of it ? it will continue his paine and torment vntill it haue made an end of his life.

The rich mans goods are his strong citie : and the feare of the needy is their pouertie.

Verse. 10.

The rich mans goods are his strong citie, &c. That is, wealthie worldlings doe trust to their possessions when they haue great store. For he speaketh not of any safetie that they haue by their goods, but which they seeme to themselves to haue, as is plainly expressed Chap. 18. 11. And it is sometimes the faults of good men in their infirmities, to repose too much confidence in outward things, when they abound with them. *Psal. 39. 6. 5.* On the other side, the want of earthly substance doth fill the hearts of viregenerate poore men, with feares of famine, and misery. And Gods owne people, are not alwaies free from the assaults thereof, by reason of the imperfection of their faith.

The extremitie of every state is dangerous, and no condition safe without grace. Of this had *Aear* a sensible apprehension, when he put vp that petition to the Lord, that hee would neither giue him pouertie nor riches : but foode conuenient for him : that is, a moderate estate, without excesse on either hand. *Prou. 30. 8.*

Dost.
The meane estate is safest.

First, both of them, be curses from God vpon wicked persons. *Psal. 69. 22. Deut. 28. 48. Iob. 30. 3.*

Reasons. 2.

Secondly, both of them draw their hearts from all good meditations, thoughts, purposes, and desires, and fill them vp with fleshly cogitations.

2

N.

Thirdly,

3

Thirdly, both of them bee occasions of vniust behaviour, procuring them by indirect dealing to prouide for themselves. *Psal 62. 10. Prov. 30. 9.*

Vsc. 1.

Instruction to labour for the spirit which will protect vs from the venome and hurtfull effects, as well of the one as the other. Doth the light of God shine on our habitations? hath hee filled our houses with good things, and giuen vs an ample portion of wealth and possessions? hath hee prepared, and well furnished our table, and made our cup to run ouer? Then wil the holy Ghost prouoke vs, *when we haue eaten and filled our selues, to blesse the Lord our God for the good plenty, which hee hath giuen vs.* Hee will effectually admonish vs, that we be not ie minded, and trust in vncertaine riches, but in the liuing God, which giueth vs abundantly all things to ioy: that wee doe good, and be rich in good workes, and readie to distribute and communicate, laying vp for our selues store against the time to come. Are we in need, and necessities, abridged of that fulnesse, which diuers others doe, as it were, swimme in? This holy spirit will sustaine our hearts, and perswade vs of our heavenly fathers all sufficiencie of goodnesse, and abilitie of prouidence and prouision for vs. That will teach and inable vs, in whatsoeuer state we are, therewith to be content: to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to haue want, to doe all things through the help of Christ which strengtenth vs. *Phil. 4. 12. 13.*

Deut. 8. 10.

1. Tim. 6. 17. 18

2

Reprooffe, first of them that too greedily labour to be rich, hunting continually both day and night, and at all times, with heart, and hand, and tongue, and all indeauour after these dangerous snares, desiring vehemently the curse of God vpon their owne soules. Secondly, of them which by idlenesse, or any other vnthrifitie courses, doe cast themselues into penury and want. When the Lord doth lay pouertie vpon his seruants for a triall or exercise, he doth support them with sundry helpe: he moueth men to be compassionate towards them: his owne prouidence doth succour them, when men, and strength, and forecast, and all other externall meanes do faile them. And especially they haue hope, and patience, and all inward supportance,

tance, which maketh the defect of outward things easie vnto them. But, when men will draw pouertie vpon themselves as a punishment, the mercies and commiserations of men are restrained from them. *Psalm. 109. 12.* and their hearts being overcome, are more ready to pursue them, with feare, and griefe, and discontentment, then all their necessities.

The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: but the remedies of the wicked, to sinne.

Verse, 16.

The labour of the righteous tendeth to life, &c. That is, the goods, which good men vsually get by trauell, (though many times they are descended to them by inheritance, or bestowed vpon them by gift, or by some other lawfull meanes brought to their hands) *tendeth to life, viz.* both of soule, and body, in this world, and for the world to come: whereas the riches of yngodly men are alwayes abused by them, and made the occasions, and meanes of vnrighteousnesse. The opposition is this: the riches of the righteous do tend to goodnesse, and so to their life: but the wealth of the wicked doth tend to sin, and so to their death.

Riches are either profitable or hurtfull according to the owners, and vsage of them. The prosperitie of *Abraham, Job,* and other holy men is commended in the word of God, for the great good that they did, and receiued thereby: and the Prophets, and other holy writings doe as much condemne the opulencie, and wealth of the enemies of God, as making them to be most malicious and miserable. *Iob. 21. 16. Job. 3. 1. 2. 3. 4.*

Doct.
Wealth is
good, or bad,
as it is vsed.

First, the one sort doe honor the Lord with their substance, beholding the hand of his providence, confessing the truth of his promises, ascribing the glory to his name, and consecrating themselves, and their wealth to his will: the other make Idols of their gold and silver, and all their possessions: or else dedicate them to, either Idols, as pride, and lust, and voluptuousnesse, &c.

Reason, 1.

Secondly, the one sort giue bread to the hungry, and drink

2

N.ij.

to

to the thirstie, and clothing to the naked, and are euery way readie to releue the necessitie of their poore distressed brethren: the other abuse their power and riches to tyrannie and crueltie, oppressing them that are already in affliction, or contemning them that are their inferiours, or withholding the goods from the needy, whom God hath made the right owners of them. *Prov.* 3. 27. or else feeding gluttons, and drunkards, and otherwise sinfull and vnchristie persons.

3 Thirdly, the one haue for themselves the prayers of poore Christians, whose bellies haue beene filled, and their loynes clothed and kept warme by them: the others haue the sighes, and teares, and grones, and sorrowes of them that be wronged, ascending to heauen, and making a continuall cry in the eares of the Lord against them.

4 Fourthly, the one sort receiue the blessings of God with thanksgiuing, and so they are not only wholesome vnto them, but holy also, being sanctified by the word, and prayer: *1. Tim.* 4. 4. 5. The other deuoure, and swallow vp the good creatures, like brute beaſts, led altogether by sensualitye.

5 Fifthly, and lastly, the one sort haue laid vp a treasure in heauen, and shall haue the full fruition of it, with greatest glory, at the appearance of our Lord Iesus Christ: and the other haue treasured vp wrath against the day of wrath, when all their violence, and crueltie shall be made manifest, and punished, and all their neglect of mercie, and compassion shall bee published to their shame and confusion, before the whole world.

Vc. 1.

Instruction, to euery man that he doe not onely suruey his state to see what he hath; but especially to know what hee is: let him not so much regard the value and quantitie of his possessions, as the faithfull, and fruitfull imployment of them. If the happinesse of *Iob* had consisted in hauing much hee could not but haue felt much miserie, when so much wealth was consumed to nothing: but now hee could recount with comfort, how weaklie and mightie he had formerly beene, because he could truly relate also, how righteous, and mercifull hee had beene.

Hee

*Hee that regardeth instruction is in the way of life: but
hee that refuseth correction goeth out of the way.*

Verse. 17.

Hee that regardeth instruction. That is, which yeeldeth reuerence, attention, and obedience to the ministry of Gods holy word, *is in the way of life*, hee taketh the right course to obtaine euerlasting saluation: *but hee that refuseth correction*, which will not indure to heare his sinnes rebuked, *goeth out of the way*, both depriueth himselfe of eternall life, and walketh towards destruction.

The doctrine of this is fit to bee handled in the first Chapter, where it is more largely set downe by the holy Ghost.

*Hee that hideth hatred, is a man of deceitfull lippes: and
hee that uttereth slander is a foole.*

Verse. 9.

Having in the former words declared the perill of them that refuse admonition, hee describeth heere the persons that vse to doe it, and they are of two sorts: some are hipocrites, that pretend, and make a shew of fauour, and good liking, and yet nourish deadly hatred in their hearts: others are professed contemners of that which is taught, but yet picking a quarrell against the man that deliuereth it, as though the fault were wholly in him, and iust occasion were giuen to reiect all that hee teacheth. But the Lord which knoweth the ground and roore of their calumniations, and cauels, imputeth them to their proper cause, and that is the sinfulness, and folly of those malicious despisers.

The Lord hath hipocriticall dissemblers in detestation. The Prophet David maketh mention of such, *Psal. 28. 3. 4. Draw mee not away with the workers of iniquitie, which speake friendly to their neighbors, when mallice is in their hearts. Reward them according to their deedes, and according to the wickednesse of their inuentions.* His earnest prayer to God is to escape their hands; for they were very subtile, and readie to take him; and verie cruell and violent if he should come into their clouches. Their

Doct. 1.

A plaine heart
pleaseth God.

trade and occupation was to worke iniquitie, and therefore also their wages, and hire shall bee destruction. By all which circumstances it manifestly appeareth, that there is enmitie betweene God and them.

Reasons. 1.

First, they are exceeding dangerous, because they treacherously in trap them that trust them. They know their counsels, and purposes, and haue all meanes of aduantage against them, whereas they would take heede of a professed aduersarie, and keepe them out of his company, and hide themselves from him. And that made *Dauid* to cry out vpon the execrable fact of *Achitophell* in conspiring against him. *Psal. 55. 12.* And so doth hee finde himselfe much grieued with them that had smooth tongues, as soft as oyle, and butter, and yet were as sharpe and hurtfull as any swords.

2

Secondly, the iudgements of God will declare his hatred against such perfidious Iudasas, not onely in executing other punishments vpon them, but euen in bringing to light the falsehood, and hidden malice of their wretched hearts. As it is said that *hatred may be couered by deceit: but the malice thereof shall bee discovered in the congregation. Prou. 26. 26.* Though *Saul* made a faire shew to *Dauid*, cloking his secret mischieuous purpose to haue him killed, by giuing his daughter to bee his wife: yet now it is notified, and made knowne to all nations, and posterities.

1. Sam. 18. 17.

Vlc.

Instruction, first to auoide this cursed sin, that bringeth the curse of God vpon the sinners. Let vs learne to bee plaine hearted towards our brethren, and if ought bee amisse in them, let our lippes faithfully admonish them in loue, and not flatter them in hatred. It may bee a courtly trick to dissemble, but not an honest part to practise it: it may bee agreeable to carnall pollicie, but it is altogether contrarie to Christian wisdom. Secondlie, to bee wary how wee conuerse with such cunning dissemblers, and if wee cannot auoide their company, yet suffer not our selues to bee deceiued by them. It is not want of Charitie, not to giue credite vnto them, but an holy discretion which the holy Ghost himselfe perswadeth vs to: *Hee that bateth will counterfai with his lippes, but in heart hee layeth*

layeth vp deceit. Though hee speake fauourably beeleeue him not : for there are seauen abominations in his heart. Pron. 26. 24. 25.

And he that vttereth slander, &c. It is a note of a sinfull foole, to haue a bitter, rayling, and slanderous tongue. Our Sauour reckoneth this amongst many other foule finnes, proceeding from a corrupt heart, whereby wicked men are defiled : One of the heart, saith he, come euill thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theftes, false testimonies, and slanders. Mat. 15. 19.

Dof. 1.
Raylers are
fooles.

First, they grieuouly wrong the partie whose name they traduce : for if a mans estimation be of greater value then gold or siluer, *Pron. 22. 1.* then a greater iniurie is offred by them which deprauē him in that, then by those that shall robbe him of his goods, and spoyle him in his estate. Nay many times the violence that is offered to ones person is lesse hurtfull then to bee reproched in his name; and therefore they that shew that indignitie are compared to hammers, and swordes, and sharp arrowes. *Pron. 15. 18.*

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, they take the way to poyson the hearts of all that shall heare their obloquy, to alienate them from all good instructions, when they shall raise vp rumors, and false reports of scandalous behauiour against the ministers of the word, and by this meanes they worke a publick mischiefe to keepe many from euerlasting saluation.

2

Thirdly, they are most iniurious to their owne soules, excluding themselves from the priuiledge of gods people in this life, & the blessed state of glory in the life to come. *Psal. 15. 3.*

3

Instruction, if we desire the credit of wisdome, let vs vse better meanes, to obtaine it, then obtrectations, and artificiall disgracings of our brethren; for that commeth not from aboue, it is no gift of God : it is sensuall, carnall, and diuellish. Secondly, not to hearken to the reports of such wicked persons that seeke to defame others, and detract from their good name : they are but foolish and base pedlers, that vtter such infectious wares; and therefore they cannot be wise chapmen that trafficke with them, and receiue them at their hands. *It is the propriety of the wicked to giue heede to false lips, and lyars hearken to naughtie tongues. Pron. 17. 4.*

Vfe. 1.

Consola-

Consolation, for them that are molested, and vexed vniustly, for the Gospels sake by clamorous and false accusers : let them consider what account God maketh of their malicious aduersaries : he calleth them fooles, and derideth their practises : and therefore in the end it shall be seene, that when they haue spat all their venome, they haue but shotte a fooles bolt, and procured shame and sorrow to themselues.

The sinne ceaseth not by the multitude of words : but hee that refraineth his lips is wise.

Verse. 19.

He seemeth still to proceede in the prosecution of the matter spoken of in the sequent verse : that men take an euill way for themselues, which refuse to be reprooued. The words immediately going before these, declare how some reiect it, by inward hatred and bitterness of heart, and yet outwardly make semblance of great loue, and friendship : others breake out into open profession of their discontentment, and malice, by reproching those that would help them out of their sinnes : and heere commeth a third sort, which would shift off all rebukes, by denying, defending, cloaking, or colouring their faults, by excusing, and extenuating matters that are charged vpon them. But all is in vaine, the sinne will not bee blown away with breath : and therefore hee sheweth that it is a poynt of wisdom to giue place by silence, and to take the blame vpon them.

The sinne ceaseth not, &c. The multiplying of words doth make a bad cause rather worse then better. So Ieremie telleth the impenitent people, that were very forward to cleare themselves of their sinnes whereof they are accused : *Thou sayest, because I am guiltlesse, surely his wrath shall turne from mee : behold I will enter with thee into iudgement, because thou sayest I haue not sinned :* Their excuses were accusations, their denials, were conuictions, their seeking impunitie without repentance, did hasten and augment their punishment.

First, when they defend, or make things small trifles, which are unlawfull to be done, they contradict the word of God, and

Doct.
A fault excused is oft times increased.
Ier. 2. 35.

and his truth, which no wit, nor art, nor eloquence shalbe able to preuaile against.

Secondly, when they hide their facts by deniall, or labour to supply their omisions, by assuming that to themselves which they neuer performed, the eye of the Lord doth beehold their falsehood, his eares doe heare how vntruly they iustifie themselves: he knoweth all their guiltinesse, and he will make the world to know their guiltfull hauling. Though *Saul* failed of obedience, to the will of God, yet hee arrogated the praise of fulfilling it: though *Samuel* by demonstration declared his sinne, yet he sought to make an Apologie for himselfe and to lay all the offence vpon the people: but that course tooke none effect; it did him no good for body or soule; it nothing preserved his honor, or state: he was conuicted, and censured, & sentenced, and vtterly cast off, notwithstanding all his excuses.

Thirdly, their owne consciences apprehend euery action, and word, and intent of the heart, and the mouer of their whole life: and they will not bee illuded by the fraud of the lips, but take occasion thereby to passe a more heauie sentence vpon them.

Fourthly, it is a sinne of it selfe to bee giuen to ouer much talke, as hauing selfe liking and rashnesse for the rootes thereof: and therefore it cannot possibly be a medecine to cure other finnes.

Iustruction, to leaue off speaking to men for the mitigation of our transgressions, and to speake to our owne hearts for iudging, and aggrauation of them to the Lord, by acknowledgement, that we may be pardoned. *Prov. 28. 13.*

Consolation, to them that humbly yeeld to a rebuke without replies, that their state is good, though their actions were bad: they are wise now in restraining their lippes from speaking of sinne, though they were foolish before to commit it.

The tongue of the iust man is as fined siluer: but the heart of the wicked is little worth.

Verse. 20.

Hee setteth foorth the excellencie of the speech of Godly men by comparison, resembling it to siluer that is purged, and

O.

fined

fined from the drosse that was in it. Because a good man will be carefull of his tongue, not onely that there bee no mixture of filthines, and lewdenesse in his words, but also to auoyde all superfluous, and idle babling, and so to open his mouth with holy wisdom. Which is contrary in the wicked, because there is a contrary fountaine in him of sinfulness and corruption, and no matter of vertue and grace, which are the springs of all wholesome speeches. Thus therefore standeth the Antithesis: the tongue of the iust man is as fined siluer, because his hurt is precious: but the tongue of the wicked is as drosse, because his heart is nothing worth.

Doct. 1.
Good mens
wealth is in
their hart, and
is vttered with
the lippes.
Math. 12, 35.

The tongue of the iust man, &c. The best wealth of a Christian is laid vp in his heart, and disburshed with his lips. And that is the meaning of our Saviour, when he saith, *that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things.* An euill man may haue coyne, and plate, and iuels in his treasury, and yet haue no treasure: and may draw money out of his purse, & yet haue no good, & do no good therewithall: but to haue grace in the soule, and to vter gracious words with the tongue is proper to a good man, and the exercise good, and the fruite of it good to himselfe and others. And albeit here seeme to be a comparison of equall, as though the tongue were iust of the same value, and worth, that fined siluer is, yet it is to be vnderstoode that at least it is so pure and precious, but in deede far beyond it in excellencie.

Reasons, 1.
James, 1. 17.

First, this is one of the good and perfect giftes, which is from aboue, and commeth downe from the father of lights: whereas siluer is a terrestiall matter, euen earth it selfe digged out of the earth, and neuer did but grow in the ground.

2

Secondly, this is currant in heauen, and acceptable to God himselfe, with whom gold and siluer are of small estimation.

3

Thirdly, such things are obtained by it, which no money can purchase, as wisdom, and grace, and the assurance of Gods eternall fauour, and all good things that concerne both soule and body. *Ezekias*, and *Iehosaphat*, with other good kings, could not haue preserued themselves by their purses, and treasures, as they did by their prayers, and holy exercises, of their
tongues;

Prova. 3, 5.

tongues. *Jonah* could not haue beene comforted, nor holpen by the greatest quantitie of money, in the whales belly, where his prayer was very effectuell. *Peter* could not haue giuen so good an almes to the poore creeple, if hee had beene stored with silver, and gold, as hee did by the efficacie of his words through the name of Iesus Christ. Aa 3. 6. 7.

Instruction, to shew our selues righteous by putting away all obscenitie of speeches, *that neither filthinesse, or conetousnesse, be once named amongst vs, nor foolish talking, nor scurrill bitter, or uncomely iesting, or any kind of rotten communication, as the Apostle calleth it, but onely that which is for the vse of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers, Ephe. 5. 4. & 4. 29.* Vlc. 1.

And especially let vs beware of the drosse of disimulation, vntruth, and falsehoode, which bee-seeme not righteous persons. Make no report for certaintie of any thing that is vncertaine, neuer make a promise without a teiled purpose, and resolution of performance. The faithfulness of *Boas* in this case was so prooued, and made manifest, that when hee had once giuen his word to *Ruth*, *Naomy* biddeth her to binde vpon it, and not further to trouble her selfe: for saith she, *the man will not bee in rest, untill hee haue finished the matter this same day. Ruth. 3. 18.*

Consolation, if good men, notwithstanding their great infirmities, and corruptions, haue yet such sinceritie in speaking, and such fidelitie in performing that which they speake: how shall not the righteous God (in comparison of whom all men are lyars, and who is not so properly called true, as truth, & all his words veritie it selfe) how shall not hee, I say, fulfill all his promises, and stand to his couenants that hee hath made with his people? Hee hath vndertaken for their saluation, their maintenance, protection, safety from sathan, deliuerance from tyrants and persecutors, and shall not all this bee accomplished? is not all pure mettall that he pronounceth? is it not as siluer tried seauen fold in the fire? *Psal. 12. 6.* If hee should faile of his word, he should forget his truth, and in forgetting his truth, should forgoe his nature, and consequently should forfeite his deitie, which were an execrable thing so much as to conceiue.

Doct. 2.
A wicked man
hath his worst
side inward.

But the heart of the wicked, &c. Though sinfull persons make neuer so great a shew on the outside, yet there is nothing within them worth any thing. To that purpose tend the words of the Apostle collected out of the Psalmes: *the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise to bee but vaine.* If the point had stood vpon mans opinion, there might easily haue beene an error in it, but he bringeth the testimonie of god vpon sure & infallible knowledge to cōfirme it. And whereas the Prophet nameth man indefinitely, that is, euery man vnregenerate *Psal. 94. 11.* Hee singlet out the chiefe, and choyest of all the sort of them, whose purposes seeme to bee of greatest price, and most likely to preuaile, and sayeth that the thoughts of the wise men best qualified with art, and naturall parts, are not onely vaine, but very vanitie, as the Psalmist hath it.

Reasons, 1.

2

First, they are altogether destitute of the spirit of grace,

3

Secondly, the heart of man, without the spirit, is foule, and filthie, and an vncleane sinke of all abominations.

4

Thirdly, the streames that issue from thence declare what the fountaine is, when all their words, and actions, and recreations, and imaginations are onely sinfull and wicked. *Hag. 2. 15. Tit. 1. 15. Gen. 6. 5.*

Vse 1.

Fourthly, Gods proceeding against them in his displeasure maketh manifest how base they are: for hee knoweth how all things are to bee priced. Since therefore hee reiecteth and casteth them away, it evidently appeareth that there is no goodnesse in them. So sayth *Ieremie, They shall call them reprobate siluer, because the Lord hath reiected them. Ier. 6. 30.*

2

Instruction, not to much to magnifie and admire them, nor too farre to depend vpon them. For better things are not certainly to be expected from them, than are in them. And therefore many times they make golden promises, and leaden performances, because they haue but drossie affections.

Consolation, to poore Christians in regard of their portion, notwithstanding they come short of the vngodly in goods and liuings. Many sinners bee set vp in state, and much worth in outward wealth, when as they bee worse than bankroupts in their foules, and wholly destitute of all inward substance, and

con-

contrary wise though the Saints haue but small store of external riches, yet they bee of great possessions in their hearts, and flow with plentie in their inward parts.

The lippes of the righteous doe feede many: but fooles die for want of wisdom.

Verse, 21.

Before was declared the excellencie of a good tongue, and well seasoned speech, and heere are the effects of it commended, namely the good that is wrought by it, the soules of many being edified therewith, and receiuing grace, and groweth for saluation, and comfort, as the body doth obtaine strength, and nouriture, and refreshing, by their meanes that minister wholesome foode vnto it. And this is illustrated by the contrarie effect of wicked, and ignorant persons, that they are so farre from feeding others with knowledge and wisdom, that they suffer themselves to be starued to death, & distruction through the want of it.

The lippes of the righteous, &c. It is the note of a faithfull man to vse his knowledge, and other good gifts for the benefit of his brethren. In this sence the Apostle sayth that though he were poore, yet he made many rich. 2. Cor. 6. 10. His meane estate would not permit him, to bestow mony, or such kinde of gifts as wealthie men vse to distribute, because he had no great plentie himselfe: but that which hee had most of, and others had most neede of, that he most liberally communicated to all that would receiue it, wherefoeuer hee came.

Doct.
Hee is the best
man that doth
others most
good,

First, godly men doe provide themselves of these celestiall graces, and thereby are made able to participate them to others. They haue a learning eare, & therefore also a teaching tongue: they be couetous of spirituall gifts, and therefore also liberall of them: they are great eaters, and as we may say, haue an appetite to deuoure all, and therefore would haue euery man to take part with them. In earthly commodities, men are of a contrary disposition: for as they are the more greedie of getting to themselves, so are they more niggardly in withholding from others: and as any one doeth swallow vp more, the lesse is left for the rest of the company: but in heauenly things it com-

Reasons, 1

Isa. 50. 4.

meth to passe that none be so frank and free, as they whose desires be most greedie of hauing, and none doe saue, and leaue so much for the vse of their brethren, as they that take their full meale, and eate as much as possibly they can. To take the fruition of the graces of God, is the way to make prouision of them for our neighbours : and to bestow vpon others is the meanes to retaine and augment them to our selues.

- 2 Secondly, they haue an vnderstanding heart, and holy discretion to giue to euery one such a portion, as is fittest for the health of his soule : some are ignorant, and haue need of instruction : some are vnruely, and haue neede of rebuke : some are weake, and haue neede to be confirmed : some are fearefull, and feeble, and haue neede of comfort, and encouragement. All these duties will a wise and righteous man exercise, according to the proportion, measure, and degrees of his wisdom, and righteousness.

- 3 Thirdly, their lips will send a message to heauen, & deale with the Lord to releue them, whose wants themselves are not able to supply. And so they do not onely feed the soules, but euen the bodies of very many. When their prayers and prayeses are accepted of God, and made effectuell, for the fruitfulness of the earth: *Psal. 67. 5. 6. Joel, 2. 17. 19.* And by this meanes *Eliab* did feede all *Israel*, by procuring rayne for want whereof they werè like to perish. All *Achabs* wealth, and the riches and power of the whole kingdome, were insufficient for such a work.

Vlc. 1.

Reproofe, of them that neuer ministrèd any thing, but infection to their people for their soules. No child, no seruant, no not the wife of their owne bosome, had euer any help by them to saluation. Their houses be nurceries, & seminaries of swearing, and gawning, and drinking, and all kindes of sinfulness. An ignorant and vngodly family so allowed, and continued, doth conuince the gouernour to be a sinner, a foole, and a kind of murderer of himselfe, as the other part of the verse sheweth, which shall bee passed ouer now, heecaue it hath beene partly handled already, and must bee againe heereafter.

2

Secondly, Instruction to make choyse of habitation, and societic

societie with iust men : for much commoditie is to bee had in their company, by the benefite of their fruitfull tongue.

The blessing of the Lord, it doth make rich, and he addeth no sorrows with it.

Verse. 22

The purpose and drift of these words is, to shew the preheminance that Gods people haue, aboue the men of the world: that whereas the wicked haue nothing but their owne hands, and carnall meanes to trust vnto for their estates; such as be Godly, haue God to prouide for them, and his goodnesse onely doth make rich, and they onely are enriched by him. But because his enemies haue vsually more store of goods then his children, and thereby it may seeme, that either men, may be rich without his blessing, or else that he is more prouident for sinners, then for saints; therefore he sheweth the difference, that troubles and vexations are intermingled with the goods of the wicked, and his seruants are freed from them. Yet it is not so to bee conceiued, as though no good men had any troubles with their riches, and that whosoever doth finde griefe, and perturbations in these earthly things, were deprived of the blessing of God, and testimonies of his fauour: but this is the meaning, that so farre as hee doth bestow them, and they depend vpon him for them, so far they escape from vexations; so that the cares and troubles grow meerely from their owne infirmities.

The blessing, &c. As euerlasting life is the gift of God, so is a good and comfortable estate in this world. *David* in his thanksgiuing to God maketh a free confession thereof: saying, *both riches, and honour come of thee, &c.* 1. *Chron.* 29. 12.

Dost.
A comfortable estate is a blessing of God.

First, neither the commodiounesse of any trade, nor skill, nor strength, nor diligence can preuaile, vnlesse hee giue successe. *Dent.* 8. 18. *Psal.* 117. 1. 2.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, he alone worketh contentment, which is an high degree of richnesse.

2

Thirdly, he giueth a chearefull heart with the portion, and causeth

3

causeth them to take their part of their possessions with comfort. *Eccles. 2. 24.*

4

Fourthly, hee preferueth them from the feares of losses whiles they inioy their goods, and from immoderate sorrow if their substance bee taken away: as that appeared in the example of *Iob*, who by his patience declared himselfe to be as rich when all his goods were gone, as hee was at that time when he possessed them all.

Vlc. 1.

Instruction, to vse the meanes that we may be blessed, and partakers of his promises. And that is: first, by pietie and religion. *Psal. 112. 1. 2.* Secondly, by calling vpon the name of God, and exercise of prayer for such things as are needefull for vs. *Iames. 4. 2.* Thirdly, by the good imployment and v-
sage of those things which wee inioy already. *Prou. 3. 9. 10.* Fourthly, by mercie and liberalitie to them that are in necessitie. *Prou. 11. 24. 25.* Fifthly, by faithfulnessse and diligence in our places and callings, as hath beene shewed in the fourth verse.

2

Consolation to such as serue him, that they shall surely be stored with all sufficiency. Those whom he will raise vp to wealth, shall certainly rise, though neuer so many seeke to hold them downe: for who shall hold backe his hands from giuing his owne, vnto his owne. How maruailously were *Abraham* and *Iacob* enriched among strangers, and infidels, not onely aliants from their religion, but vowed enemies to their nation: And where in his wisdom hee seeth it not fit to fill their houses with amplitude of substance, he will make fewe things to yeeld many comforts, and small things to bee of great force, and meane things to be very precious and excellent. *Psal. 37. 16.*

3

Terrour for the wicked, that they can neuer be rich: though they haue riches, yet they are not rich, but onely plagued with a multitude of torments and vexations. *Eccle. 2. 26.*

It is a pastime to a foole to commit wickednesse: but wisdom is the delight of a man of vnderstanding.

It is a pastime to a foole to commit wickednesse, &c. That is, sinfull men take great pleasure in doing that which is euill, as if it were a sport, or recreation to them: and it is as much ioy, and refreshing to him that is Godly wise, both to get wisdom, and to performe all the good exercises thereof.

Sinne is the delight of sinners, and grace of good men. Of the one sort wee haue many testimonies in this booke, but in the second Chapter especially, ver. 14. They delight in doing euill, and reioyce in wicked frowardnesse. And in the fourth Chapter ver. 17. it is said, *that they eat the bread of wickednesse, and drinke the wine of violence, it is meate and drinke vnto them to doe mischief.* Of the other sort the Prophet is an example and patterne, in the hundred and nineteenth Psalm: where in many places he professeth his singular comfort and delight, that he conceiueth in the heauenly word of God, as when hee saith: *how sweete are thy promises vnto my mouth? yea more then hony vnto my mouth. And they are the ioy of mine heart.* Psalm. 119. 103. 111.

Dost.

Sinne is a pastime to sinners, and grace is the ioy of good men.

First, this contrarietie ariseth from the contrary causes of these contrarie likings. All wicked men doe loue sinne, and it is as deare vnto them as the members of their owne bodies. And all godly men doe loue righteousnesse, and rather desire to be deliuered from life, then separated from grace, and the seruices of God. Now it is a perpetuall rule which neuer faileth, that whatsoener any man loueth most, that hee will alwaies most delight in. Secondly, wicked men are fleshly, and therefore liue after the flesh, and saueur of the things of the flesh, and delight in the workes of the flesh. And godly men are led by the spirit, and saueur of the things of the spirit, and reioyce in the fruites of the spirit.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, it is seene in the contrary effects of both sides. First, wicked men runne violently to sinne, and will not desist from their diuellish purposes, before they haue effected them: though godly men through naturall corruptions, and temptations, haue sometimes a pronenesse, and inclination to euill,

2

P.

yet

yet they may be easily retracted by counsell, and admonition, as *David* was from the sin of *Nabal*, but they constantly proceede to the performance of euery good dutie. Secondly, wicked men doe meditate in the night, and indeauour in the day to fulfill their sinfull desires. *Nicah. 2. 1.* Godly men doe meditate in the night, and indeauour in the day, to know and obey the holy will of the Lord *Isa. 26. 9.* Thirdly, when wicked men haue accomplished their sinfull desires, they surfeit with gladnesse: when they are disappointed they are filled with bitter vexation. *Prom. 4. 16.* When godly men haue committed sinne, it bringeth anguish vpon their hearts, when they haue performed any Christian seruice, it is a comfortable refreshing to their soules. Fourthly, the custome of sinning is so sweete to the wicked, that they will not forsake it, but take them for their enemies that shall dissuade them from it: the yoke of sinne is heauie to the Godly, that they still strue to be disburthened of it, and the yoke of Iesus so easie that they willingly yeeld themselues to it, and account them their best friends that shall help them against the one, and further them to the other.

Iob. 20. 12.

Ife. 1.

Consutation of the pernicious opinion of those, that allowing themselues in the pursuite of all sinfull pleasures, and profits, euen seruing their lusts with delight, and working vncleannesse with greedinesse, doe yet vndertake for the safetie of their owne soules, and challenge the name, and prerogative of righteous men.

3

Consolation, to them that are wearied with the rebellious motions of the flesh, that are not able vtterly to subdue the remnants of sinne, and their owne naturall disposition, but that sometimes their pride giueth them a wound; sometimes their rage breaketh out sodainly, & striketh them so that the prints of the strokes are seene, and the scarres which remaine after them; sometimes couetousnesse presseth so hard vpon them, that it maketh them to giue ground, yea it taketh, and imprisoneth them: yet if they hate these corruptions the more because they haue ben hurt by them, if they labour for libertie, and groane for deliuerance out of their captiuitie, they are still reputed wise, and the faithfull souldiers, & seruants of Christ.

That

*That which the wicked feareth, shall come vpon him :
but God will graunt the desire of the righteous.*

Verse. 24.

The condemnation in the world to come, which vngodly men through the guiltinesse of their consciences are often summoned vnto, when God shall draw their soule out of their body, they shall certainly fall into. And those iudgements, and miseries of this life, which they most hate, though they hope to escape them, they are in danger to bring vpon themselves.

And that which is most desirable, and will be most comfortable to Christians, the Lord which knoweth what is most acceptable to them, and profitable for them, will in due season bestow vpon them.

That which the wicked feareth, &c. Whatsoever is most contrary to the affection, and liking of sinfull persons, that they may expect to be plagued withall. This the Lord threatened to the rebellious and obstinate Iewes by the Prophet Ezechiell, *I will take from them their power, the ioy of their honor, the pleasure of their eyes, and the desire of their heart, their sunnes and their daughters. Ezek. 24. 25.* The things which they are altogether vnwilling to depart with, those would hee strip them of : and consequently, that which they would bee very loath to beare, should heauily bee laid vpon them.

Doct. 1.
That which ill
men most fear
shall surely be-
fall them.

First, ordinarily they feare that which is the most proportionable, & proper punishment of their offences. As proud men haue nothing in so great detestation, as reproach, & contempt, and nothing is so much due vnto them as to bee contemned.

Reason. 1.

Secondly, their feare and dread of falling into those evils, doth cause them to seeke the puenient of them by euill meanes, and thereby they take the way to inforce the speedie execution of them. As they that would flie farre from necessitie and want, by hasty getting of riches, and substance, doe very often prouoke pouertie to come swiftly with violence vpon them. *Prou. 28. 22.*

2

Thirdly, the Lord doth make choise of, and singeth out such manner of iudgements as shall most sting them, & come nearest to their hearts, and those are they which are most ter-

3

Joel. 5.
Isa. 3. 16. 17. &c

rible to them. What could haue beene so grieuous to *Haman*, as first to bee made *Mordecaies* page, and then afterwards to bee hanged vpon the gallowes, then which nothing could bee inuented more horrible to him, and therefore hee had prouided it for *Mordecaie* whom hee most mortally hated?

V&c.

Instruction, first to fence our selues against the imitation of the wicked, and desire of their state, by considering how wretched, and miserable their condition is. Euen presently they are arrested, and after a sort apprehended with feares: hell and destruction doe sometimes shew themselves vnto their soules; and in time to come, vnlesse they repent, they shall haue full possession of them. Secondly, to free our selues from all our feares, by flying to the Lord for succour, against the mischiefs which we would not fall into, & for repentance & humiliation against the sins that wold draw them vpon our heads.

Doct. 2.
Good mens
desires shalbe
graunted.

Psal. 145. 19.

But God will graunt, &c. The best way to haue our wills satisfied, is to bee Godly. For to such there is a promise made that God will fulfill the desires of them that feare him. Wherin yet these rules are to bee obserued: First, that our will bee agreeable to Gods will, the desire must bee holy, and seasoned with the spirit, and not carnall, and corrupted by the flesh. *Dauid* in a passion would needes know how long hee was to liue. And *Iames* and *Iohn* would haue fire to come from heauen to destroy a whole towne, and an other time they made sute to bee the second men of the whole earth. These petitions were not graunted, because they were not aduisedly asked, nor safe for them to bee obtained. Secondly, that sometimes lawfull desires are not performed in the same kinde, but exchanged for better, and that which doth more good is bestowed in steede of them. *Moses* desired to enter into the land of *Canaan*, hee was denied that, but hee entred sooner into the heavenly and blessed rest of euerlasting life. *Paul* would haue beene perfectly freedde from all originall corruption, or at least from the stirrings, and working of it, but it stooode not with the wisdome of God to yeeld that vnto him: but hee assisted him with grace against it, which was much more for his owne glory, and the sound comfort of *Pauls* conscience.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, that wee tarry the Lords leasure, and depend on his hand, to minister in fittest time, all those good things which our soules desire, and so wee shall not faile to receiue them, when hee seeth that they will bee most expedient for vs.

First, hee rayseth vp the heart to seeke for them, hee inclineth the soule, so much to long after them, and therefore it was his purpose to bestow them. *Psal. 10. 17.*

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, he giueth the spirit of faith, & prayer which will haue no nay: they neuer sustaine any repulse, whatsoever they lay hold on, they make it their owne. *Iohn. 15. 7. 1. Iob. 5. 14. 15.*

2

Thirdly, hee calleth vs to him by commandement to seeke all good things at his hand, and encourageth vs to the same by promises. *Psal. 27. 4.* and therefore his owne truth is our security for them.

3

Fourthly, his all sufficiencie, and absolute abilitie for performance doth abundantly exceede all the desires of all the faithfull, yea of all creatures, though they were neuer so ample, and seruient. *Ephes. 3. 20.*

4

First, consolation to righteous men, against the defects that are in their soules, and the necessities of state, and body, they are best prouided for both: for so great is the credite which they haue in the court of heauen, and their fauour with the king of heauen, that they aske, and haue: desire, and preuaile: and if they bee not forward inough that wayes, they shall bee called vpon to put in their petitions, and enlarge their desires. *Iohn. 16. 24. Psal. 81. 10.*

Ver. 1.

Secondly, terror for their enemies, that by tyranny, and violence compell them to complaine of them. So far as the Lord is readie to grauntie them by granting all good things which they aske, so far is he also prouoked to punish their aduersaries and oppressors that cause them to cry.

2

*As the whirle winde passeth, so is the wicked no more:
but the righteous is an euerlasting foundation.*

Ver. 25.

The meaning of the words is, that vngodly men, howsoever they flourish for a time, yet doe sodainely come to ruine, and destruction, as the whirle-winde swiftly bloweth ouer, and

is lesse constant, and permanent then the ordinary winde is, though there bee no stabilitie in any. But when it is said, *they are no more*, he doth not intimate any mortalitie of their soules, as though they should be wholly dissolued as brute beasts: for their soules are euerlasting as well as Gods peoples, and their bodies shall be raised vp againe at the day of the Lord aswell as the Saints: but it is their hope and happinesse, and not their being that perissheth, they shall neuer recouer any good estate any more. Now against these are set the righteous, whose soule, and body, and blessednesse haue a settled safetie as a foundation that can neuer be removed: So that this is the opposition: the wicked are as a whirle-winde, and so are no more: but the righteous are like a firme foundation, and so perpetually remaine.

Doct.
Vngodly men
haue fare
shows: but
good men
haue a firme
foundation.

Hof. 13. 3.

Though the state of the vngodly be more ruffling, then the seruants of God, yet the state of Gods seruants is more certaine and stable then the vngodly ones. The whirle winde mounteth aloft, and tosseth vp hay, and straw, and stubble, and filleth mens eyes with dust, and cometh violently vpon them with a blustering blast, but immediately it is gone, & passed far away: the foundation lyeth low in the ground, and is neither seent, nor heard, yet there it continueth immouable for many generations. The vnconstant, and tickle estate of wicked men is fitly expressed by liuely comparisons in the prophesie of Hosea. *They shall be as the morning cloud, and as the morning dew that passeth away as the chaffe that is drinen with a whirle winde out of the floore, and as the smoake that goeth out of the chimney.* The contrary firmitude, and stabilitie of the Godly is by our Sauour himselfe likened to an house that is built on a rocke: *and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beat that house, and it fell not: for it was grounded on a rocke.*

Mat. 7. 25.

Reason. 1.

First, the one sort haue beene as vnconstant in their waies, and as easily blowen from sin to sinne, as the chaffe, and dust, and withered leaues haue beene carried vp and downe with the winde, and if they haue entred into any good course, there haue beene no more stedfastnesse in them, then is in the morning cloud, and morning dew. *Isa. 64. 6. Hof. 6. 4.* The other

ther haue rooted and settled aswell in faith, as in all faithfull behauiour: and for these causes the one side flittereth away, and is gone to misery, & the other remaine happy & blessed for euer.

Secondly, the one sort haue God, and his Angels to pursue, and push them away: the other haue God, and his Angels to vphold, and confirme them, that they be not moued from the fruition of his fauour.

Terrour, for sinfull men whose short and momentanie prosperitie shall so speedily and sodainely be turned into miserie.

Instruction, first, not to affect the pleasures of sin, wherein may be a continuall expectation of suddaine destruction. Secondly, not to repose affiance in any wicked person, for though there were some constancie in their hearts, or mowthes, which seldome or neuer falleth out, yet there is none in their life and estate. *Psal. 146. 3. 4.*

Consolation to such as are molested with the boysterous tempests of wicked men: though they rore lowd, they shall not rage long, the Lord will put a speedie end to their crueltie. *Isa. 29. 19. 20. & 51. 13. 14.*

As vinegar is to the teeth, and smoake to the eyes, so is the slothfull to them that send him.

As vinegar, &c. That is, too much vinegar, or other things that be sharp, and soure, doe set the teeth an edge, and smoake doth bring both smart, and hurt to the eyes: so doth the slothfull person, or he that is giuen to any other lewd behauiour, doth worke vexation of heart to them that send him, or commit matter of moment vnto him.

He that imployeth in any seruice, vnworthie and carelesse persons, shall bring sorrow and molestation vpon himselfe.

There is another prouerbe which tendeth to the same purpose, though the similitude be different: As though he should cut off his messengers feete, so hee drinketh violence, or hurt, that sendeth a message by a foole. *Prou. 26. 6.* He doth as much iniurie to himselfe, as if he should maime his messenger of his feete, or make him lame of his legs: for as the one in that case should not be able to dispatch his journey, so neither can the other

2

Vlc. 1.

2

3

Verse. 26.

Doct.

We must bee carefull whom we imploy in our affaires.

other well performe the things that are committed to his care and wisdom. It is a speech that is ordinarie in vse, that hee must neuer looke to speede well that sendeth a foole on his errand.

Reasons. 1.

First, there is perill of falsehood, and treachery, or of much remissenesse, and negligence, or want of discretion, and skillfulness, by all which there groweth hurt, or losse, or trouble to him that put him in trust with his affaires, as *Mephibosheth*, and *Bembadad* found by the services of *Ziba* and *Hazael*.

2

The curse of God doth vsually accompany the actions and waies of cursed sinners, and therefore they that adventure to entertaine them, haue many times a part of the punishment with them.

3

Thirdly, all the faults, and absurdities in word, or worke, of foolish and sinfull seruants are imputed to the reproch of their maisters that imploy them, and so the sorrow is caused by shame and infamie.

4

Fourthly, the contrary will cleare the truth of this point. For if good seruants and faithfull messengers, be for the comfort, and credit, the safetie & profit of such as do vse them, then they that are altogether of an other manner of affection, and disposition, cannot but worke an other manner of effects, and consequents.

Vlt. 1.

Admonition, to bee very heede-full to auoide that noisome sinne of slothfulness which bringeth so many michiefes with it, both to our selues, for soule, and body, and state, and name: and to others also, and those especially whom in speciall manner we owe dutie vnto. Secondly, to make a wise choise providently of such as wee haue occasion to vse in any businessse, that their industry and diligence, their prudence and discretion, their faithfulness and sound dealing, may bee a refreshing and not a torment to vs. *Prou. 25, 13, 5.* If wee haue obtained such as bee not as smoake to offend our eyes, but our eyes may behold them, and their good behaviour with delight, let vs not bee vineger to their teeth, or smoake to their eyes: let not our sourenesse and discontentment, our niggardinesse and ouermuch sparing, be any meanes of their discouragement.

Deale

Deale kindly with them, and bee liberrall to them, that thou maist not onely retaine them still to be thy seruants, but giue all good furtherance to the continuance of their vprightnesse.

The feare of the Lord increaseth the daies : but the yeares of the wicked are cut short.

Verse. 27.

The feare of the Lord, &c. That is true pietie and religion, with the exercise also of iustice, and righteousness, *increaseth the daies*, That is, as a meanes it preferueth those that are indued with it, from an vntimely death : *but the yeares of the wicked shall bee cut off*. Their vngodly and sinfull course of life is sometimes an instrument to bring them speedily to their end, as by surfets, and euill diseases, or falling into the hands of the magistrate, or by quarreling, and such like. Sometimes it prouoketh the Lord to stay them in the middelt of their race, and not to suffer them to come to that age which by their strength and constitution of body they might haue attained vnto. And in this sence the Prophet saith in the Psalmes, *that the wicked* Psal. 55. 23. *shall not line out halfe their daies*. This doctrine of this verse hath beene handled already in the eleauenth verse of the former Chapter.

The patient abiding of the righteous, shall be gladnesse : but the hope of the wicked shall perish.

Verse. 28.

After that the children of God haue once imbraced his promises, afflictions and temptations doe vsually ensue thereupon, that it would seeme to sence and fleshly reason, that misery and troubles were the onely rewards of pietie, and obedience, and nothing else performed to them that trust in his word. Now therefore he sheweth that a better state and condicion remaineth for them : that their sorrow shalbe turned into ioy, & their mourning into gladnes, when the Lord shall deliuer them from troubles, and fulfill all his promises. Which is illustrated and further amplified by the contrary case of the wicked : which, howsoeuer now they seeme to haue the preheminance, and are most likely to preuaile heereafter, shall yet be deprived of their present prosperitie, & frustrated of all future expectation. This

Q

then

then is the opposition: The hope of the righteous shall preuaile, and bring them gladnesse: but the hope of the wicked shall perish, and so worke them sorrow.

Doct.
They that in
affliction wait
on God shall
timely finde
ease.

The patient abiding, &c. They which depend on God in their afflictions, shall in due season be deliuered from them. Vpon this ground an exhortation is rayed in an other place of this booke. *Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continually. For surely there is an end, and thy hope shall not be cut off.* *Prou. 2. 3. 17. 18.* Though troubles and sorrowes are in appearance, perpetual, & endlesse, yet they are but temporarie, and come quickly to an end: though hope, & possibilitie of help seeme readie continually to vanish away, yet it neuer ceaseth, nor is taken away.

Reasons, 1.

First, there is nothing in all the world that is more infallible assured of certaine successe, then the hope of christians. It neuer misseth of that which it aymeth at, nor any time disapointeth them that possesse it. *Rom. 5. 5.* For faith doth support it, & the truth and fidelitie of God himselfe is the foundation of it.

2

Prou. 13. 12.

Secondly, that which is long delayed, and much waited for is the more welcome, and acceptable when it is performed: so sayth the holy Ghost. *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the hart: but when the desire commeth it is a tree of life.* The vertue of it cureth al the former faintings, & the delightfull tast doth swallow vp all the sorrowes. If *Isaacke* had bene borne to *Abraham*, or *Jacob* to *Isaacke* the first yeere after they were married, their ioy would haue bene but ordinarie, whereas the long barrennesse made their birthes exceeding comfortable to them, as the benefits were memorable to posteritie.

3

Thirdly, the delay doth draw out manie prayers to God, and maketh way to attention at the ministerie of the word, it helpeth meditation, it leadeth to faithfull comforters, it furthereth good conferences, it procureth al good exercises, & all these good exercises procure a proportionable measure of comfort.

4

Fourthly, it giueth men experience of their faith, and patience, and constancie, which all declare, and testifie the soundnesse and sinceritie of the heart, which is the roote of sound and holy comfort.

5

Fifthly, the longer it is before the Lord doth performe his promises,

promises, the larger his mercies are when hee doth bestow his blessings, whē he prolongeth his seeding, he provideth a plentiful hartest: when he doth not presentlie giue the reward, he taketh time to tell out much, that his gifts may be the greater.

Incouragement to patience in all distresses, let vs tarrie the Lords leisure, and waite vpon him, and he hath by word & writing, by scale, & oath vndertaken to deliuer vs out of th. m. Our fauour promiseth that in the greatest troubles, when they shuld be most violently, & treacherously, & vnnaturallie persecuted, not onely of forraigne aduersaries but of their domestical familiars, of their friends, of their kinsmen, of their brethren, of their owne parents; yet not one haire of their heads shoud perish. Their haire and heads might be cut off, and life might be taken away, but nor lost, they should not bee vainely bestowed, without good effect in a holy cause. Onely he admonisheth vs to possesse our selues with patience. If we keepe all sound with-in, euery thing shall be safe both within and without. And then we begin to lose our aduantage when we leaue the possession of our selues, and the power of our soules through distempers.

Reproofe of them that make more hast than good speede to shake off their crosses, by corrupt courses. They deprive the Lord of that honor which they should yeeld to him, in waiting for his help, and themselves of that comfort which hee would haue yeelded to them together with his help. Their ioy will wither as corne that is cut downe before it be ripe, and become abortiue as a stil-borne childe, whereof the mother miscarieth.

But the hope, &c. Vngodly men beguile themselves with a deceitfull expectation of happines. For the same point is shortly after repeted againe in the next Chapter, ver. 7. *When a wicked man dyeth his hope perisheth.* When good men enter vpon possession of their happie estate, the terme of sinners is out, and their lease determined, and growne out of date.

First, the Lord knoweth their purposes, desires, and expectations, and will duely defeat them of the same. *Psal. 1. 6.* Secondly, their hope ariseth not frō faith, nor is grounded on the promises of the word, but on sence, & sight of presēt prosperity.

Thirdly, they hope for things which are altogether impossible

Vlc. 1.

Luke. 21. 18. 19.

2

Doct. 2.

Will men seeke-
ing to be hap-
py deceiue
themselves.

Reasons, 1

2

3

Qij.

ble

ble to come to passe. As first, to see the euerfion and ouerthrow of Gods people. *Psal. 112. 10. Mica. 4. 11. 12.* Secondly, that God should faile of his iustice & truth in executing his threatnings denounced against them. *Dent. 29. 20.* Thirdly, to take their fill of sinfull pleasures heere, and to enioy also felicitie and happinesse in the life to come. *Luke 16. 21.*

Vie.

Confutation & terrours for them that liue ignorantly, & impiouslie, & yet trust to die blessedly, & obtaine euerlasting life: They haue no other euidence for safetie from damnation, but their opinion that they haue a strong faith, & whatsoeuer the preachers say, they regard it not, they trust that god will be more mercifull then so, they hope to be saued as well as the best of them all. For so their comparisons run: ordinarie Christians are too bafe for them to compare with, they must equalize themselves with the chiefe and principall,

Verse. 29.

The way of the Lord is strength to the vpright man: but feare shall bee to the workers of iniquitie.

By the way of the Lord, is meant his whole administration, both of his word, whereby he maketh his will knowne, and of his spirit whereby he giueth grace, & of his providence, whereby he protecteth his seruants, and performeth all good things vnto them. By euerie one of these meanes, doeth he establish & confirme both the hearts & states of such as be faithfull. But as for the wicked, howsoeuer he suffer them for a time to proceed in their vngodly waies without anie great crosses, yet at last he executeth such iudgements vpon them, as the verie sight thereof causeth them to quake and tremble. Thus standeth the opposition. The way of the Lord is strength to the vpright, for preferuation, and therefore it worketh boldnesse: but it weakeneth the wicked for destruction, and therefore it bringeth feare.

Doct. 1.

The way of the Lord, &c. They that are most godly, are in best safetie. The point hath bene handled in the first verse of the former chapter, concerning wisdomes seauen pillars.

Doct. 2.

They that are most forward to sin are most terrified at the

But feare, &c. They that be most bold & venturous to sinne, shall be most frighted with the punishments of it. In the 14. *Ps.* the Prophet describing the conceits, conuersation, & condition of irreligious miscreants, doth bring them in at the first, saying that

that there is no God, and therefore they corrupt and doe abhominable works : but afterwards declaring the event, hee sheweth that there they are taken with feare, and as the words are, they feared with feare, intimating the greatnesse of their dread and terrour. *Psalm. 14. 5.* An example whereof we haue set downe before; namely, the foole-hardinesse, and cowardlinesse that was found in *Belshazzar. Dan. 5.* sight of, the
punishment.

First, the great guiltinesse that is in their consciences doth dismay their harts, and daunt their courages. Reasons. 1

Secondly, the Lord doth shew himselfe terrible in his iudgements, and they finde and feelee that they are not able to stand before him. *Isa. 33. 14. Apoc. 6. 16. 17.* 2

Thirdly, their foolish flattery whereby they haue illuded themselves, hath brought this misery vpon them. For they presumed of peace & safety, and so their destruction commeth suddenly without resistance. *1. Thes. 5. 3.* And so it is said in another place : *They shall bee taken with feare, where no feare was,* that is, where was no suspicion of feare, or likelihood of danger. *Psalm. 53. 5.* 3

Instruction, to prevent sin by fearing the iudgements that will ensue vpon it. *Iob. 31. 3.* Secondly, to prevent the punishments, after that wee haue sinned, by a holy voluntary feare and humiliation. *2. Cor. 7. 11.* Thirdly, to confirme our selues in both these, by fearing and trembling at the word of the Lord. *Isai. 66. 2. Habac. 3. 16.* Vso.

The righteous shall neuer be remoued, but the wicked shall not dwell in the earth. Verse. 30.

The righteous shall neuer be remoued. They shall neuer be remoued from Gods fauour : they shall neuer be remoued from the constant graces of the spirit in their soules: or hurtfully, in the way of a curse, from an outward good estate, nor vnseasonably be cut off from the earth. Now because some of these iudgements doe seeme sometimes to fall vpon some righteous persons, who for a season be eclipsed of grace, and separated from the fruition and comfortable sight of Gods kindenesse, and fauour towards them, & their estate in appearance is wholly ruined

nated and ouerthrowne, therefore the word doth well beare it, agreeably to the meaning of the holy Ghost, to say, that *the righteous shall not be removed for euer*. Though they seeme to be cast downe for a time, yet they shall be restored againe afterwards. The contrary is heere affirmed concerning the case of the wicked, who shall certainly fall vnlesse they repent: they shall not continue in that estate wherein they are most grounded, and haue greatest establishment, they are so far from inioying eternall life in heauen, as that the vengeance of God will not permit them long to keepe their owne breath, or to hold the outward possessions of the earth. The opposition therefore in effect is this: *The righteous shall neuer be removed*, but haue an habitation for euer in heauen: but the wicked shall be removed, and not suffered so much as to dwell in the earth, the sence is the same with, verse. 25.

Verse. 31.

*The mouth of the righteous will be fruitfull in wisdom,
but the tongue of the vnrighteous shall be cut out.*

This verse agreeth altogether in substance of matter with the eleuenth: onely the comparison is altered: for there the tongue of a good man for the constant store of holy speeches, was resembled to a plentifull fountaine, and heere to a fruitfull tree, or fertile field: & there the wicked for lewd speeches was threatned to haue his mouth stopped, and heere to haue his tongue cut out, that is, the iudgements of god vpon him for his vngracious and cursed speakings shall strike him as mute and dumbe, as if the tongue were cut out of his head.

Verse 32.

*The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, but the
mouth of the wicked speaketh froward things.*

The meaning of these words is, that a righteous man knoweth & regardeth what is best pleasing to God for him to speak, and what is most gratefull to good men to heare, & what doth deserue acceptation at any mans hand for faithfulness & truth, and therefore he will vse his lips to vtter it: but the wicked neither knoweth nor regardeth these things, and therefore he vomiteth out onely peruerse speeches, such as tend to rebellion
against

against God, the damnifying of men, and the annoyance and hurt of his owne selfe.

The lips. It is a point of godly wisdom for a man so to speak as his words may be accepted for his best advantage. This appeareth by manifold examples of holy men in the Scriptures of God, when the Ephraimites were imbittered against *Gedon*, and chide with him sharply, how easily did he still them, abating their spirits with a mild and modest answer? *Judg. 8. 2.* When *David* was in a great rage, comming with a purpose to destroy *Nabal* & his whole familie: how readily was *Abigail*'s mind instructed with vnderstanding, and her lips provided of prudent speeches, wherby she presently pacified his displeasure? *1. Sam. 25. 23. 24.* This skill also had *David* himself to win the hearts of his people, & to hold them fast vnto him by the wisdom of his words: yea by the force and efficacie thereof he made the heart of bloudy *Saul* his cruell and implacable enemy for a time to relent. What shall we say of *Paul*, who knew what words would draw his mortal foes to turne after a sort to be his friends, his persecuters to preferre him, the Priests and Pharises to stand for the defence of th'apostle of Christ?

Doct.
He speaks
wisely whose
words make
most for his
advantage.

First, the word and spirit of God doth informe his seruants in this knowledge, and giue them discretion to apply themselves to the state of the persons and season. *Isa. 50. 4.*

Reasons, 1.

Secondly, the vse & exercise of gracious & religious speeches doth bring a dexteritie to iudge what is most meete to be spoken, and to deliver the same in the aptest manner: and so (as trained souldiers) they are in a continuall readinesse, vpon due occasion, to deale with God and all sorts of people. *Col. 4. 6.*

2

Confutation of all Popish praier which are offered without any assurance of acceptance, and consequently it conuinceth all Popish persons to be vnrighteous men, because they know not what is acceptable: for so much they plainelie declare, when they pronounce they know not what, in a strange language, when they call vpon the dead which hear them not at all: when they intertaine strange aduocates to vsurp Christ his office: when they aske things needlesse, as the saluation of such as are actually and absolutely saued: when they aske things which

Vse. 1.

are

are hotelesse, as the deliuerance of such as are irrecoverable damned. And their best apologie for these things is, that if they doe no good, they will doe no harme, whereby they make profession that they are vncertaine whether their prayers bee like to please God, or otherwise be vaine and idle.

Reproge, with terrour for them whose mouthes speake forward things, which may know that their words are gratefull to none but the diuell, and damnable men, who wittingly and willingly, and spitefully with greedy desire, doe belch out such bitter blasphemies, and other cursed speeches, as may offend the maiestie of God, and grieve the hearts of his children: which they doe of purpose to professe that they are neither seruants to the one, nor members of the other, but vowed enemies of both: but doe they prouoke the Lord to wrath, and not themselves to the confusion of their owne faces? doe they assault the glorious name of god, & strike at him with their virulent & venomous tongues, and shall not he set vpon them, and destroy their soules and bodies with his grieuous plagues and fearefull iudgements? Even this is a principal cause, together with whoredome, and other sinnes of death, that casteth so many into the magistrates hand, and bringeth them to an ignominious end, for stealth, and robberies, for murders, and most hellish and abhominable treasons.

Consolation to them that order their lips aright, they shote not at an vncertaine marke: they may as well know how they shall speede, as how they speake, though their counsels or rebukes be not sometimes well taken of men, yet at all times they are pleasing to the Lord, who will also requite them with a glorious and blessed reward.

FINIS.